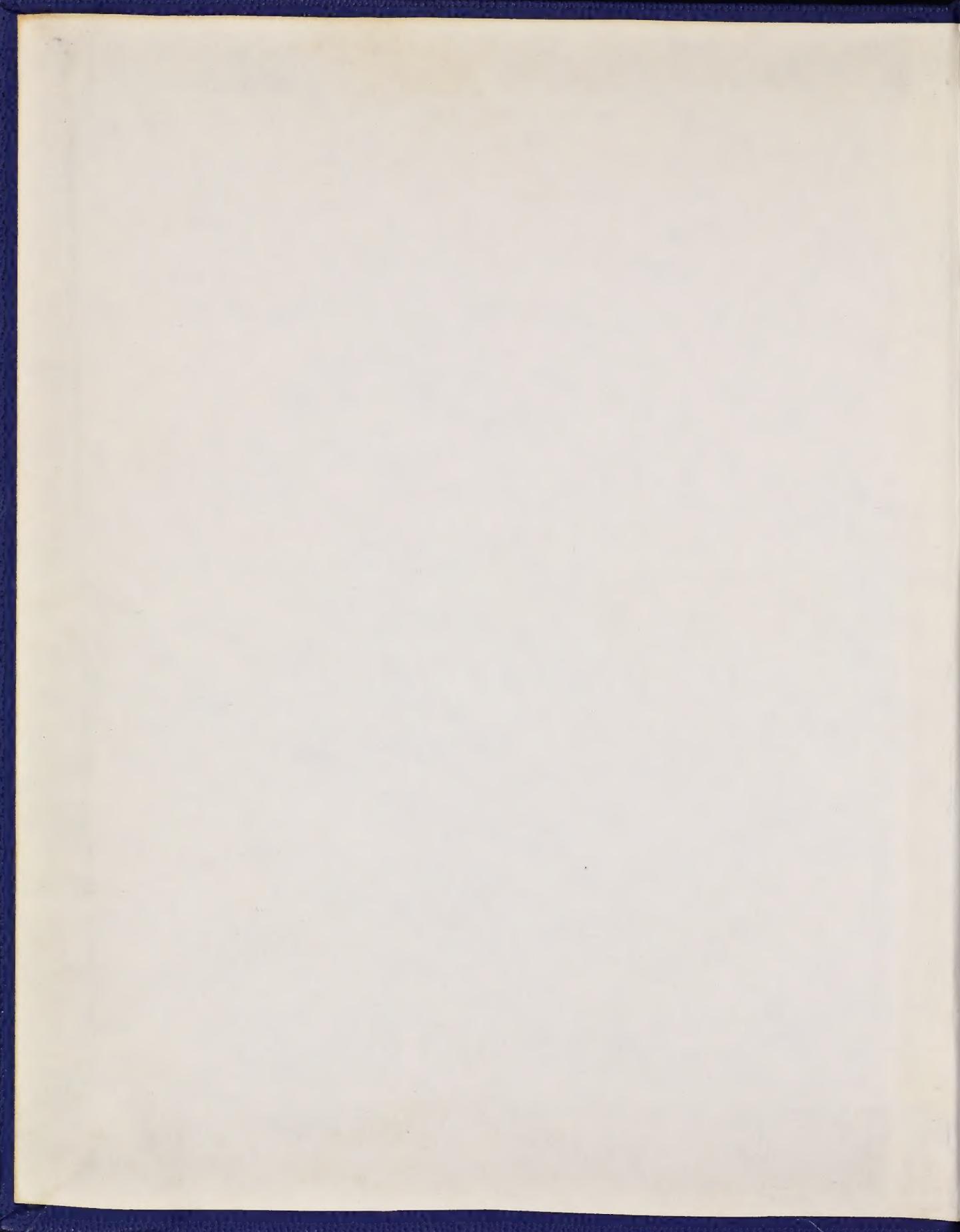
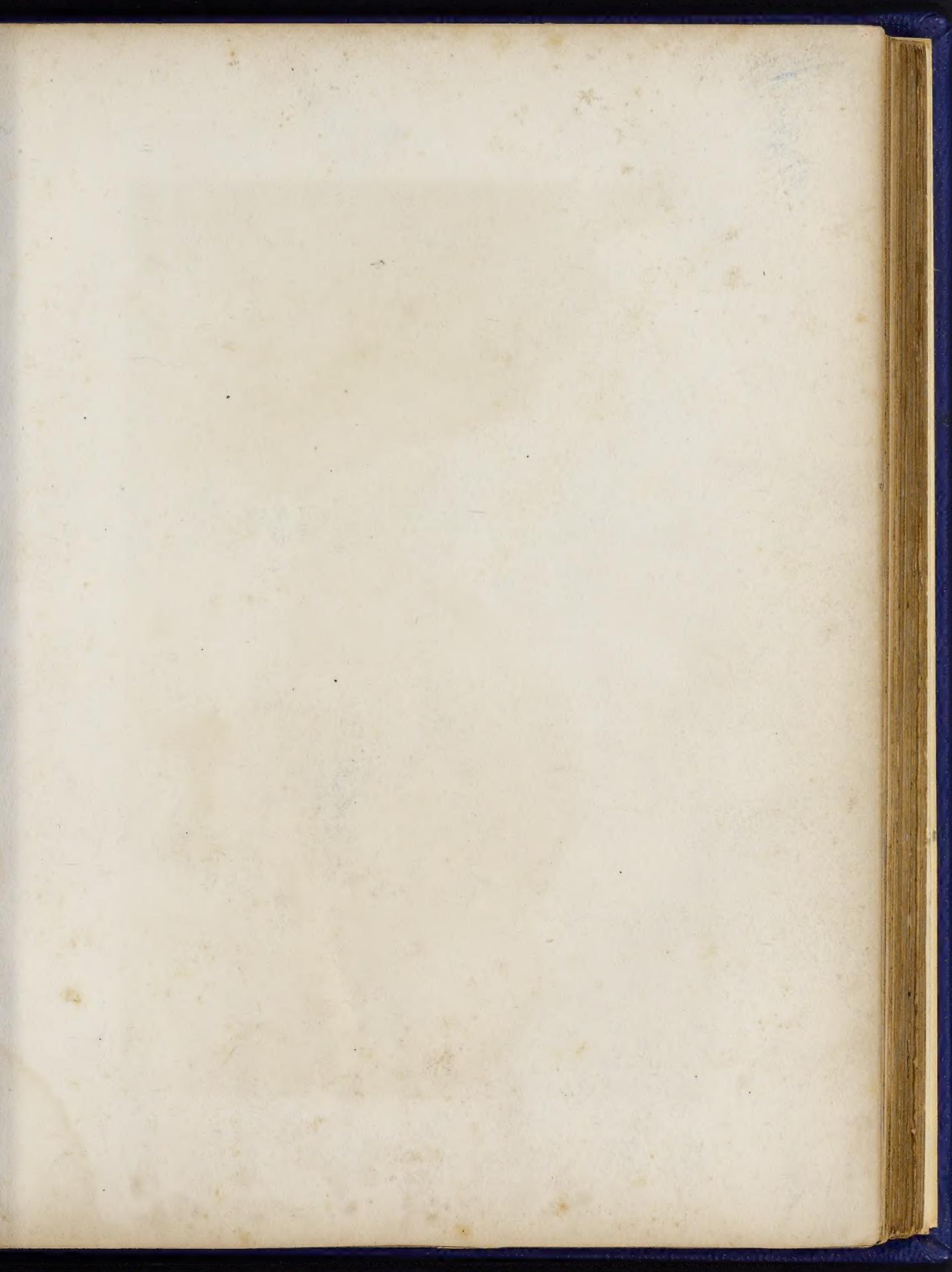


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AMERICAN
SCENERY



Mount Vernon.

NEW-YORK,

DAVID A. ALLEN.

A M E R I C A N S C E N E R Y,

ILLUSTRATED.

BY

T. ADDISON RICHARDS, N. A.

WITH THIRTY-TWO ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL.

New York:

PUBLISHED BY LEAVITT AND ALLEN,
379 BROADWAY.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854,

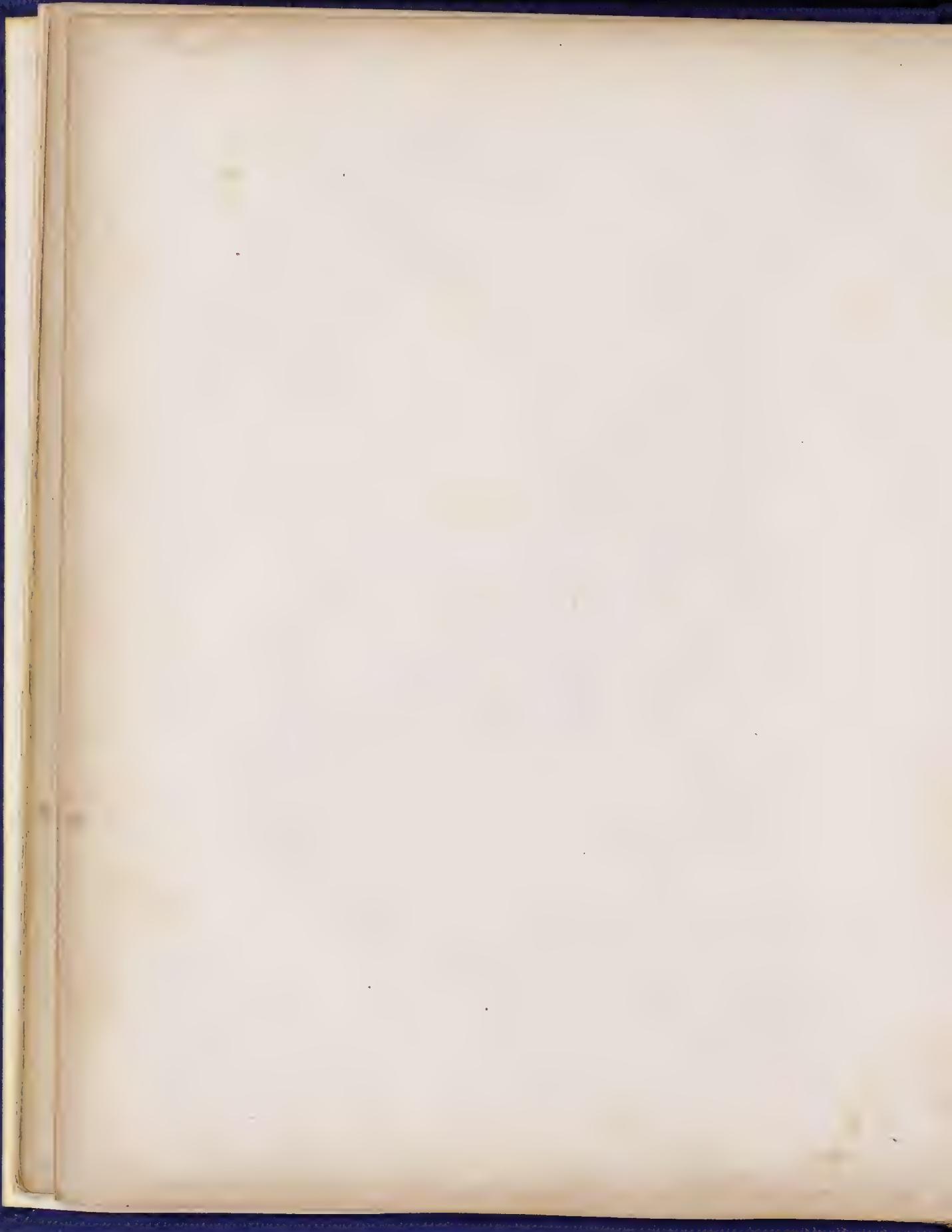
BY LEAVITT AND ALLEN,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of
New York.

BILLIN & BROTHERS, Printers and Stereotypers, 20 North William street, N. Y.

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In the following discursive pages the author has taken a brief, but he hopes an intelligent, glimpse at the varying characteristics of the beautiful natural scenery of our country. It has been his endeavour, throughout, so to relieve the gravity of fact with the grace of fiction, as to present at the same time an instructive topography and an entertaining romance. The better to accomplish this difficult end, he has assembled around him a company of accomplished and genial travellers, who discuss the subject familiarly in all its phases, each from his own peculiar stand-point and after his own individuality. It is not necessary that the reader be here presented to these gentlemen, since they will shake him by the hand, and tell him what manner of men they are, in the first chapter,—which subserves the usual rôle of a preface, but is too much an integral and important part of the narrative to be so called.

It is not the least of the author's hopes, that his labour may serve, in a humble measure, in the further development of the already very high appreciation of our wonderful scenery, and in the culture of the popular love of that charming Art—which is, at the same time, its interpreter and its chronicler—the Art of the Landscape Painter, from the more legitimate study of which he has turned aside, in leisure hours, to this accessory toil. And it is as such an accessory to the province of his own profession, rather than as a trespass upon the fields of the sister art of letters, that he thus ventures to exhibit his work.

UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK,
July 1st, 1854. }





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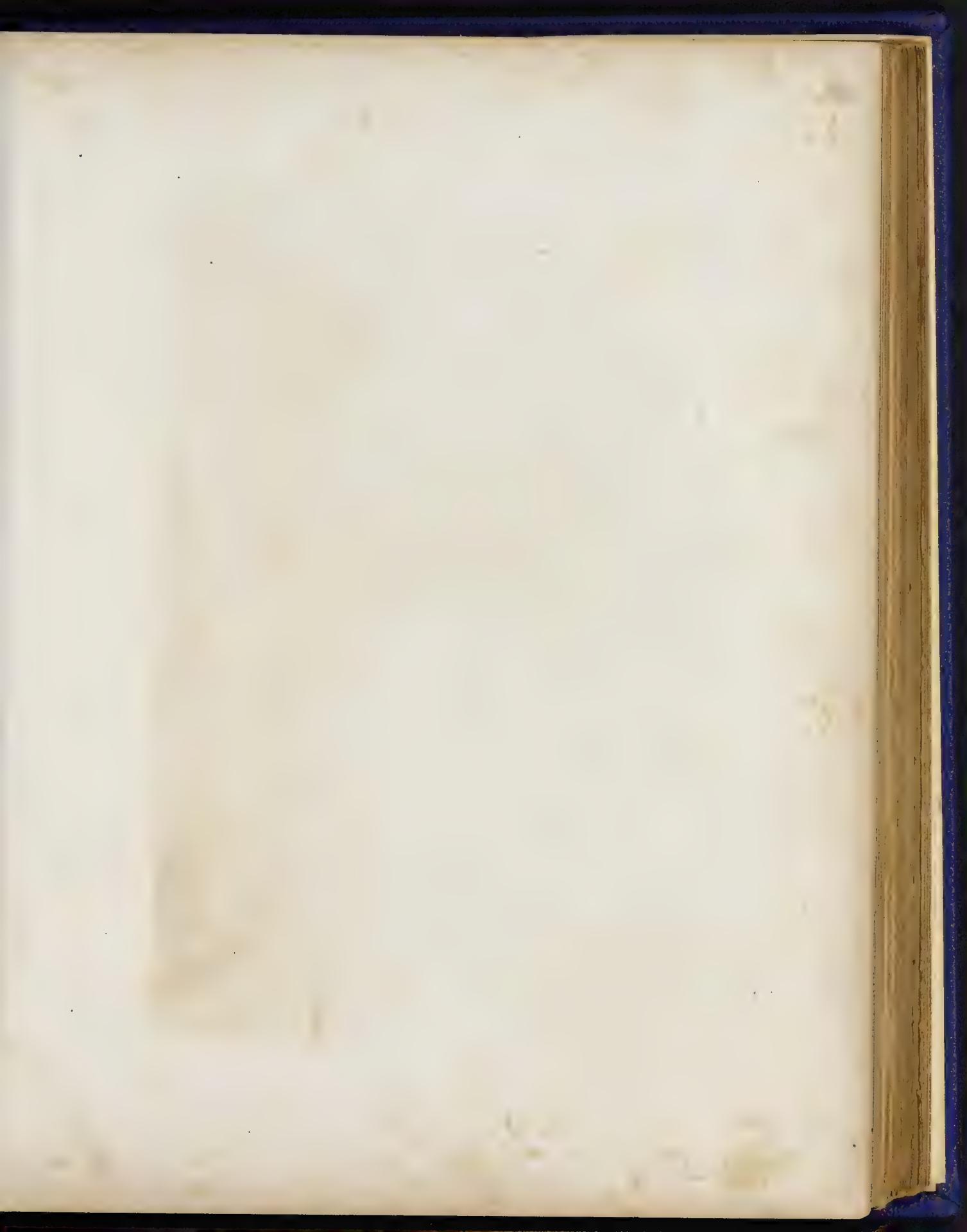
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CHAPTER I.

THE wit and wisdom of a pleasant circle of gay friends who, while they never exceed, yet always quite fill up, the limits of becoming mirth, had, through a long evening, dashed a flood of laughing sunshine upon the sombre-hued walls of our antique studio. The sparkling coruscations of their mad humour availed, however, but partially to exorcise the heavy shadows which hung like a pall over our usually buoyant spirits. One disquieting thought oppressed us, and, as usual, awakened our entire schedule of ugly remembrances, which to be sure had no earthly relationship to the first intrusive visitor, yet came in that hateful gregarious spirit to which misery is proverbially given. While the hours were flying in the brilliant, yet, as it then seemed to us, bootless pleasure of social gossip, we were thinking of duties deferred, of "time misspent, and fair occasions gone forever by;" and in that wretched state of mental languor, which though it sees, yet is too feeble to confront and conquer difficulty, we were dreaming of our neglected duties—to you, reader; of the ways and means of fittingly acquitting ourselves of the task of preparing these pages; wondering how on earth we could possibly do the deed, and that, too, within the brief time which our publishers

allowed us. We half regretted that we had so rashly assumed the labour. We obeyed the behest of Sir Philip Sydney, to look within our own heart and write, but we found, like Sir Charles Coldstream when he gazed disgusted into the crater of Vesuvius, that there "was nothing in it!" We had recently laid aside that charming bouquet of "Passion Flowers" which had just blossomed so sweetly in the literary parterre, and a lingering fragrance came to us, in the remembrance of the lines—

"I never made a poem, dear friend,
I never sat me down and said,
This cunning brain and patient hand
Shall fashion something to be read.

"Men often came to me and prayed
I should indite a fitting verse
For fast or festival, or in
Some stately pageant to rehearse,
(As if, than Balaam more endowed,
I, of myself, could bless or curse.)"

The bricks, we felt, should be made, but, alas! where was the straw? In brief, we suspected ourself of decided stupidity, and could, in no way, reason us out of the grateful conviction. Our evil mood, though not virulent enough to check the humour of our guests, was yet sufficiently evident to attract notice and to elicit sympathy. A dozen clever and kind doctors were anxiously occupied with our moral pulse. We explained our symptoms, and were soon cheered and flattered into a more quiet and hopeful state.

"The waters of your fancy," said Mr. Brownoker, "will, by all hydraulic law, soon remount to the desired height; for, pardon the compliment, is not the reservoir lofty enough for all your needs? Some vulgar trash temporarily obstructs the conduit—a buckwheat cake too much at breakfast, perhaps, or

wine and walnuts too abundant at dinner. Rest assured, my dear boy, that what is poetically called "a mind diseased," is, in the vulgate, often nothing more than pork and beans *ad nauseam*. We'll soon blow away the blues, and bring you back to concert pitch!"

"Remember Mrs. Chick, and 'make an effort,'" said Mr. Brownoker.

"You have but to meet the enemy and he is yours," added Mr. Megilp.

"Forget not Sir Joshua, 'Nothing is denied to well-directed labour,'" said Deepredde.

"Or Richelieu calling back the spent fire and energy of his early years, 'In the bright lexicon of youth there's no such word as fail.'"

"The sacred text, 'As thy day so shall thy strength be.'"

"Cæsar, 'Veni, vidi, vici!'"

Refreshed with this torrent of cheering words, our courage and hope were rapidly springing into life again, and when the last scrap of conclusive and flattering raillery, "Remember yourself, and 'the country is safe!'" came to our ears, the stainless pages before us seemed rapidly to pass from fair manuscript to corrected proof, and from proof to peerless volume. Countless editions followed each other through our brightening view, and for very modesty we closed our eyes upon "the opinions of the press."

"Your book shall be finished as speedily as Aladdin's castle! We will all lend you a hand," cried our guests. "We will have a literary 'bee.'"

"You shall cut out the work and we will 'play tailor to the Muses!'"

"What is your theme? Not metaphysics—aye?"

"Not sermons?"

"Not politics?"

"Not temperance?" chimed in one upon another, the associated face sensibly lengthening the while.

"By no means!" we hastened to explain. "Neither philosophy, religion, nor morals. Heaven forbid! We have a more genial topic—the Romance and Reality of American Landscape—its physique and morale, its historic tradition, its poetic legend, its incident, adventure, and suggestion. What say you to the text?"

"You could not have a happier one, and we, learned in the book of Nature, are the very preachers to discourse thereon. Are not you, yourself, are we not all, painters and poets—life-long worshippers of Nature? Have we not laid our souls upon her sacred altar? Do we not ken her in all her thousand mystic utterances, and will she not lend us the living inspiration of her smile as we seek to chant her praise? Verily a noble text, and now for the heads of the sermon!"

"Our publishers," we explained, "are happily possessed of a portfolio of pictures of many of the most charming and famous bits of American scenery—a portfolio which they laudably desire to give to the world—and we are pledged to play master of ceremonies on the occasion, to expatiate upon the panorama as it passes."

"A pleasant task enough, in which, as we have said, we will all assist you. In our periodical conclaves here we will take subject after subject, and each one shall give up that which is most within him of his experience, adventure and imaginings of the several scenes. We could not have more delightful occupation as we sip our sherry and puff our havanas. As old Phocylides says—

"Tis right for good wine-bibbing people
Not to let the jug pace round the board like a cripple,
But gaily to chat while discussing their tipple."

"Nothing could be more agreeable," said Mr. Vermeille, "than, while sitting around our winter fire, to live over again, to retrace our merry courses from Maine to Texas, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. We will emerge from the rank everglades of Florida and watch the buffalo as they scour the boundless prairie. Look from the proud summit of Mount Washington over the waters of Winnipiseogee and Squam, across valley and hill, village and city, to the ocean-bounded horizon. From the lyric peaks of the Catskills we will scan the windings of the peerless Hudson. On the Adirondacks we will drink in the beauties of Horicon and Champlain, and the verdant sweeps of the green hills. Our barque shall thread the tortuous path of the Mississippi and the Missouri. We will repose ourselves by Prattling cascade, or listen to the sterner voice of Niagara 'pouring its deep eternal bass in Nature's anthem.' 'Lord! what a tramp we'll have!'"

"We will rekindle our fancies," added Mr. Flakewhite, "with the wild legends which the red man has bequeathed to the scenes of his lost home, and strengthen our patriotism and virtue with remembrances of the gallant deeds of Trenton, Saratoga, Yorktown, Champlain, Bennington, and many other consecrated fields."

"If our scene," said a sculpturing friend, who had just returned to us after a long sojourn in Europe, "were but laid amidst the storied haunts of the Old World, and our characters culled from its peculiar and picturesque populations, we should have more plastic material to work with than we shall find in the rugged quarries of this new land, untutored by the touch of Art, unsoftened by the breath of Time; and a people too active and practical for poet's uses."

"A mistaken notion of yours, my dear friend," rejoined Mr. Flakewhite. "I grant you that, to the common eye and feeling, the story of our battle-fields, the freshness and newness of

our natural scenery, may seem tame, wanting the poetic veil of distance; may be belittled by its contemporary character; but we, I hope, are men of larger vision, possessed of that unprejudiced and prophetic spirit which, like the catholic power of love, 'lends a precious seeing to the eye,' revealing to us the immortal essence of actions and things, stripped of all passing, degrading accessories. It is only your shallow-pated fellow for whom 'too much freedery breeds despise.'

"It is in the very freshness you condemn, added to the grandeur, scope, and vigour of our landscape, and to the same qualities in the morale of our people, that our strength lies: qualities pointing to a larger humanity, and to a higher and nobler civilization, than the world has yet been blessed with. We, as poets and artists, are favoured in being called upon to water this grander spirit rather than to expound the meaner though more dainty aims of the old art and thought.

"Now, last, though not least, were our land, in poetic and philosophic inspiration, a thousand times behind all other climes, rather than so gloriously before them, is it not our own land, and is not the offering of our love and service a duty, no less than a delight?

"— O, my native land!
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain hills,
Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in Nature;
All lovely and all honourable things—
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being.
There lives not form, nor feeling in my soul,
Unborrowed from my country!"

"But, will our subject, think you, interest the popular heart?" asked Mr. Brownoker.

"Nothing more so," responded Mr. Deepredde, "for it touches a gentle and universal chord in the human soul. Since the halcyon days when Adam and Eve rejoiced with exceeding joy beneath the glorious skies of Paradise, Nature has ever shared bountifully in the love and adoration of man. This feeling is an instinct, no less than a refinement, in our souls. The degraded Guebre, and the poor Indian, with untutored mind, worship the elemental principles of Nature, bowing down in mystic rite to the sacred fire, or gazing up, with rapt vision, to the throne of the Great Spirit, the blazing sun; the wretched negro no less, as he bows to the god of poisons, enshrined in the foliage of the poison tree, or prostrates himself before the omnipotence of the waters, in his prayers to the crocodile; so, too, the followers of Zoroaster, kneeling in the free and unpolluted air of the grand mountain tops.

"From the lowliest to the loftiest spreads this all-pervading love. 'He,' says Pindar, 'deserves to be called the most excellent, who knows most of Nature.' 'Nothing,' Cicero tells us, 'is so delightful in literature, as that branch which enables us to discern the immensity of Nature, and which, teaching us magnanimity, rescues the soul from obscurity.' Horace disdained the glitter of Augustus's court, in the quiet of his Sabine home. Then we hear of the

'Olive-grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the attic bird
Trills her thick warbled notes the summer long.'

Where and when, indeed, have greatness or goodness astonished and blessed the world, unnurtured by the sacred manna which Nature, in her varied forms, provides?"

At this point of his discourse, Mr. Deepredde was suddenly

brought up by a sacrilegious hint that the small hours were coming; and a general movement among our guests ensued.

"*A Mercredi!*" said one of us.

"We will not fail you!" cried another.

"Have your portfolio ready," advised a third. •

"With the especial subject of the evening," said a fourth.

"And we will each weave around it our garland of fact and fiction," promised a fifth.

"And our word for it!" sang out the last, as his form vanished in the outer darkness, "enough copy shall be elicited to satisfy the cravings of the most carnivorous 'devil' that ever worried the soul of poor author: and of a quality, too, let us flatter ourselves, to win the patient ear of many a pleased reader."





CHAPTER II.

ON the appointed evening, our impromptu committee re-assembled. Mr. Deepredde was called to the chair, and the minutes of the previous meeting—that is, dear reader, the foregoing chapter—were read and “ordered to be printed.” The portfolio was opened, and we selected from its stores the accompanying charming picture of the famous Park fountain:

“We cannot do better than thus begin at home,” observed an original and profound thinker. “Let us avoid the vulgar error of undervaluing those beauties and delights which lie within our daily reach.”

“Fountains,” solemnly observed the respected chairman, by way of initiating the subject of the night, “have from the remotest periods, and among all people, been objects of especial interest. In varied shape and costliness, they embellished all the chief towns of ancient Greece. Old Pausanius has left us accounts of many of these favourite structures. Among others, he mentions a most remarkable one at Epidemus, in the sacred grove of Esculapius; and two yet more interesting at Messena, loved by the populace under the names of Arsinoe and Clepsydra. We read also of beautiful fountains in the city of Megara, in

Achaia; of the famous Pirene at Corinth, encircled by a marble wall sculptured with various grottoes, from which the waters flowed; and of the Leina, also at Corinth, surrounded by a grand portico, under which were seats for the public ease and comfort in the sultry summer evenings.

"All of us have delighted our fancies, and many of us have blessed our vision, with these rich and classic altars of the water sprite in the art and nature-loving land of Italy. For my own part, though Pope seems to think it but a shabby sort of warming 'to think on the frightful Caucasus,' yet on many a scorching August night, in this salamander town of ours, I have cooled my brow and brain with the remembered sparkles and breezy drippings of the merry waters by St. Peter's, at Frescati, and Termini, and Mount Janiculum; in the dreamy gardens of the Belvidere, and at the lovely villas of Aldobrandini and the Borghese.

"I doubt not that we all cherish equally grateful recollections of the fountained beauties of Paris—that city of fountains—a title, let me observe, *en passant*, which I trust our own goodly city of Gotham will one day successfully dispute; for surely, to speak after the manner of rude men, 'she has got it in her.' As I was saying, though, we have lingered many a happy hour in the sweet watered groves and wilds of Versailles, lounged delighted at St. Cloud, or strolled with outward and inward satisfaction through the passages of the Tuileries."

"Our respected chairman, in his learned remarks," observed Mr. Vermeille, "has touched upon the poetry and sentiment of our theme, though very much more might be said on this head: much more (as frightened eyes glanced from all sides of the table) than I have any thought of now saying. That first and most perfect of women, our great mother, Eve, made her sinless toilet in the mirroring waters. The whispers of the fountain fell in cadence with the love-songs of Jacob and

Rebecca. It was by the fountain side that our Saviour dis-
coursed to the Samaritan woman. Fountains are associated with
countless beautiful incidents and histories in the life of mankind.
They have ever been a treasured theme and simile of the poets.
The sacred writers forever sing of the fountains. Shakspeare
alludes to them continually; so Milton, Sidney, Shelley, and
indeed all who have ever uttered the breathings of truth and
beauty."

"Before we fall into too discursive a gossip," said a brother
of an inquiring turn of mind, "would it not be well to glance
at the genealogy of our theme, by a brief review of the history
of its great source, the immortal Croton?"

A general nod of approbation followed this suggestion, and
all eyes turned intuitively to the chair.

"Not to trespass upon your time, gentlemen," commenced
Mr. Deepredde, "I will say nothing of the achievements of the
Egyptians under Sesostris; of Semiramis, in Babylonia; of the
Israelites in the days of Solomon and Hezekiah; or of other
stupendous aqueducts of ancient art and enterprise; but come
at once to our own—a work which, in magnitude and value,
may rank with the trophies of any period. As long ago as
1793, Dr. Joseph Brown proposed to supply our city with water
by bringing the river Bronx to Harlem in an open canal,
raising it to the required height by steam, and conducting it
to the town in a six-inch pipe."

"The doctor was an old fogy!" interrupted a progressive
gentleman. "The Bronx and a six-inch pipe! pooh!"

"True," resumed the chairman, "that was the day of small
things; but still we must not be unmindful of the Doctor: he
planted the humble seed from which has grown the sturdy
Croton. This seed first shot up under the culturing hand of
our honoured fellow-citizen, Colonel De Witt Clinton, in the year
1832. In 1835 the bud was fully formed, and on the Fourth

of July, 1842—many of you remember the merry day and its rejoicings, gentlemen—the great work was completed; and, with music and merriment, the Croton Lake, forty long miles away, was escorted over hill and valley to the firesides of our people, and endowed forever with the freedom of the city. This introduction, gentlemen, cost us some twelve millions of dollars."

"It has just occurred to me, Mr. Chairman," said Mr. Vermeille, "that should either of us be in want of a theme for our muse, we might happily find it in an autobiography of the Croton. What an epitome of human happiness and misery its varied story would present! What changeful experiences it must gather in its passage from the peaceful seclusion of its native hills through the thousand scenes of joy and sorrow, of virtue and vice, which it sees within the voiceless walls of this mad capital, to its final home in the great ocean of waters. Here, with gentle sympathy and sweet hope, it kisses the sinless brow of the babe at the holy font, and there sighingly seeks to cool the fevered tongue of the dying sinner. Now it gives hearty greeting to the thirsty labourer, sings gaily in his humble kettle, boils his frugal dinner with a will, and anon, it shrinks from the hated association with the poisoned cup of the drunkard! Oh! a merry elf—a sorrowing slave—is the Croton!"

"You remember, gentlemen, no doubt," said Mr. Flakewhite, "that graphic Croton story of Hoffman's, called the 'Man in the Reservoir,' in which he so thrillingly and philosophically analyzes the varying emotions of his hero, plunged beyond help in the deep waters, and hour after hour, in the silent night, vainly seeking a means of ascent in the steep mural banks!"

"A capital and most effective picture! Apropos, are there no legends or tales associated with the history of our fountain, or has its life been too brief to gather them?"

"Enough, and winsome ones too, without doubt, if it could but speak for itself!"

"Poor thing! Will not some imaginative brother speak for it? Brownoker, suppose you concoct us a—"

"Punch?"

"No, a romance. It is quite in your line."

"Not for the present occasion. The story of our fountain should be one of dainty sentiment. Flakewhite is your man."

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Flakewhite at length, and after much persistence on the part of his friends, "as my turn must come at some time, I submit. I do not vouch for the literal truth of what I am about to say to you. I tell the tale simply as it—comes to my fancy. Listen then to the romance of

The Smile of the Fountain.

"Not many years ago, a young lad came from the seclusion of the country to this bustling city, in confident quest of fame and fortune. This was no strange occurrence. Hundreds are thus daily coming, and disappointment, only, is but too often the sad reward of their bright and credulous hopes. Our hero was not of these unfortunates. He was doomed to struggle no less than they; but not, like them, to sink in the trial. He came unknown, unfriended, and with empty purse. He felt the cold charities of the rude world, and ate the bread of bitterness. He swallowed to the dregs the cup of hope deferred and toil too long unrewarded. His ambition was to be a painter; and though his sensitive and haughty spirit illy brooked the slavish labour, yet want and necessity compelled him to perform the humblest services—the lowest drudgery—of his art.

"He was a youth of strong heart and brave will. He was possessed of all that subtle delicacy and spirituality of feeling, that romance and beauty of soul, which instinctively seeks com-

munion with all that is most gentle and exalted in our nature, and which finds its development in thought and action far above the common interests and pursuits of men; yet no less was he imbued with that practical and philosophic spirit which, though it be but for the end's sake, rightly estimates the value of the humble means by which the loftiest, no less than the lowliest, success must be won. He was eager to reach the goal, yet patient in the race. His gaze soared to heaven, but he forgot not the earth which sustained his feet.

"Day after day, and, indeed, year upon year, he pursued his silent toil, renewing his hope and strength in communion with the pure and beautiful spirit of Nature as often as his wearying labours permitted him to seek the home of his heart in the sunlight and shade of the country. When, in process of time, the gay prattle of the new Park Fountain one bright sunny morning startled his wondering ears, in the very midst of the dull scenes of his daily life, his heart leaped up with the dancing waters, and their joyous voice spoke to his soul then, as ever after, in glad whispers of sympathy and hope. It brought back to his remembrance the smiling eyes of the mother he would never see again; of the home from which he was an exile. It filled his spirit with indescribable emotions of pleasure, and, from that hour forth, exercised over him a strange and irresistible fascination. It was the bright far-off star of his wonder and love, bending down to his ear in familiar converse. No matter for cold or hunger, for exhaustion or despondency, he was ever, in his leisure hours, at early morn, and in the waning night, invincibly drawn by the magic spell of the fountain. The edge of the murmuring basin grew to be his home. Here he would sit through unobserved hours, gazing upwards at the pearly drops, or down into the darker floods, seeing, in each, fantastical or profound minglings of the light and shade of life. Many a touching history of joy and

sorrow, many an earnest lesson of cheer and of chiding, he read in this mystic page; and though sometimes the sadder, he yet grew ever wiser and stronger by their teachings.

"One quiet summer evening, thus musing in pleased abstraction, his face grew beautiful with the light of pleasure as his eye caught the reflection of a smile, sweeter than often blesses either the waking or sleeping vision of the dreamer. More than once before he had seen this spirit of the waters—for spirit only he seemed to think it, since it never had occurred to him to look up for the original of the sweet face. I know not how long he might now have continued to gaze upon the beauteous image, had not a light, merry laugh at his side recalled him to earth, and revealed to his startled perceptions the living form of the fair being whom he had worshipped only as a dream."

"Frederic Marzan—so was the youth named—bowed slightly, half involuntarily, and half as in apology for the temerity of his intent gaze.

"'You are a devoted dreamer, sir,' said the lady. 'I have been looking in vain for the object of your search in the fountain. Pray, may I ask what you see there so charming?'

"'A vision of beauty, madam,' answered Frederic, his truant speech quickly brought back by her gay and cordial voice and manner, and speaking with his wonted grace and gallantry, though with an earnestness and truth of expression not always the soul of such graces—'a vision, madam, scarcely less fixed in my memory and fancy, now that I look upon your living face, than when I watched its smile in the fountain.'

"The lady laughed merrily, though evidently not displeased with the bold compliment.

"'Your courtesy, sir, is as graceful as it is long delayed,' she rejoined, in a voice of frank coquetry which her patrician face and bearing could well afford. 'I have often stood by

your side here, wondering what odd confidences you and the fountain were exchanging—what mad tales you were telling each other; yet never until now have you deigned to honour me with any consciousness of my presence.'

"I never, madam, dreamed that the sweet smile that I beheld in the water was more than the image of my own teeming fancy. It ever brought in its train such a retinue of absorbing and happy thoughts and desires, as completely to withdraw my mind from all the actual about me."

"I am sorry then that I have broken the spell and released you from its grateful enchantment. Yet,' she continued, in a more serious tone, not unmixed with a feeling of thoughtful sadness, as she glanced at the threadbare attire and the anxious face of the friendless student, 'I do you a good service in calling you back to earth. It is not well, nor wise, for you to waste your hours in dreams, still idle and profitless, bright and winsome as they may be. Your fortunes seem yet to be made, and to be awaiting none but your own strong and willing hands. This enchanted land is not the place for you, Sir Pilgrim. You should be in the busy, acting world. Musing and dreaming are in fitting measure the nurse of achievement; in excess, they only kill. Gather strength and purpose at the fountain, if you will; but do not, too, spend it there.'

"As the lady spoke, our hero's surprise at the unexpected seriousness of her speech, and at the grave character of her rebuke and counsel, half restrained the feelings of wounded pride which were gathering in his breast. Still, there was no little haughtiness in his voice and manner, as he replied—

"You misjudge me, madam. I do not spend strength and purpose here. Frederic Marzan is not of the vile herd who basely sigh for what they dare not seize. As you think, my fortunes are yet to be built, and by my own unaided strength. I ask no mean prize in the world's gift, and I will have my

asking! We may meet again, when you will not thus unjustly rebuke me.'

"'I do not doubt it,' said the young girl, looking steadfastly into our hero's eyes, sparkling with haughty pride and high resolve.

"'Forgive my grave and gratuitous lecture,' she continued gaily, and kindly extending her hand, as she at length yielded to the impatience of her cavalier to resume their walk.

"'Thanks, many thanks, for your gentle kindness and for your counsel. It is not gratuitous—not vain. It gives me an incentive to effort which will conquer though all others fail,' said Frederic earnestly, as his burning lips touched her proffered hand.

"'Gone,' mournfully soliloquized the youth, turning his eyes from the retreating figure he had been watching until lost to his sight. 'Gone forever the Smile of the Fountain! She will not come back again; and if she should, what is that to me? I may not look into the actual face, and draw from it glad imaginings, as I have done from the vanished image;' and his brow darkened as he gloomily reviewed his own life and prospects, and thought of the great social gulf which he doubted not stretched between the stranger lady and himself. 'But,' he resumed, after a pause, and as a new courage seemed to cheer his soul, 'a truce to all vain sighs and sickly dreams, and let us see if will and work cannot bring back the Smile of the Fountain!'

"From this hour, the whole character of Frederic Marzan was changed, or developed, rather. He was a youth no longer; but a man, with man's graver and deeper views of life, and with man's higher and firmer wish and will. He still often visited the fountain, and looked earnestly into its waters, but the old smile never again greeted his sight. Many forms stood around him, but in none did he discover the one he sought.

Now and then his heart would beat more quickly, as light figures glided past him, and with inward trepidation he would seek to look beneath the veils which buried unanswering faces.

"Despite his stern resolutions, which were for the most time invincible, oppressive memories of faded hopes would spring up, and, swelling into irresistible torrents, would in a moment tear away the strong pillars of the iron bridge which he had, with so great effort, sprung over the gulf of all sad bygones. Still, in every changeful mood, the fountain was his sure recourse —his hope or his consolation. He felt the subtle, healthy influence of its smile always around him. It seemed to bless his life.

"From the day of his rencontre with his unknown adviser his horoscope brightened. Pictures which had lingered in the shops were bought, and others found purchasers as fast as his pencil could execute them. His name began to be heard and honoured in the world. He made rapid strides in his professional career. His fortunes brightened day by day; success followed success; eager patrons surrounded him; and the fame which once seemed to him at such unattainable distance, now came unsought and almost unwelcomed. His studio was the favourite resort of the beauty and fashion of the town. Many gay belles asked the immortality of his pencil; many flattering smiles were lavished upon him; but none whose light outshone the never-forgotten radiance of the Smile of the Fountain.

"He mingled freely and incessantly in the social pleasures to which he was invited, and yet with an insouciance not quite suited to his brilliant prospects and early years.

"'You seem marvellously indifferent, Marzan,' said a fashionable lounger to him one day, while filling the sitter's chair, 'to the smiles of our fair belles. Do none of the arrows reach your heart, or are you impervious? But then you have such incomprehensible notions about women. Now there's that odd,





haughty, but ruinously handsome and fearfully clever little witch, Edith Manners—I beg pardon of her stateliness—*Miss* Edith Manners. If you can withstand *her* charms, I give you up as hopeless. By the way, how is it that you have never painted her portrait? Why, my dear boy, you might paint our peerless though perverse Edith, and then contentedly die. Why, 'pon my word, you are a Goth not to have done it long ago—the picture, I mean—not the dying.'

"'I have not the honour of Miss Manners' acquaintance,' said the artist, coldly.

"'Not the honour of her acquaintance!' resumed the visitor. 'Why, really, *per bacco!* you astound me! There is still a hope for you, when you do know her, as you soon shall. I'll manage the thing for you. Nothing is—'

"'Pray do not trouble yourself on my account.'

"'O, my dear friend, no trouble, I assure you: *au contraire*, a pleasure. Why, she is just the woman to suit you; and I am positive—no compliment—that she will fancy you. Queer creature! I don't exactly understand her; she has so many odd ways—does and says so many strange things! Why, would you believe it, at Mrs. Dashaway's, once, I joined a set of writing people, with whom she was talking about the characteristics of great men—Washington saving his country, and all that; and when I said I hoped yet to have the honour of preserving my country, she said it was very possible, as Rome was saved by a goose! Then everybody laughed, and I really should have thought the impertinent little wretch was quizzing me, if she had not explained that she meant to say that, if a goose could save a capital like Rome, what might not *I* do? Shockingly complimentary in her, wasn't it? Well, well, she does obliging things sometimes, though more often over the left than the right. When she goes to the opera, she sits in a private box, where no one can see her. She says she goes to hear

the music, not to see a puppet show! It must be a great bore. Queer creature! Why she'll turn her back upon any of our set—capital fellows they are, too—at any time, to talk to some old fogey of a D. D., or to some seedy poet, or to some poor devil of a painter—no offence—nothing personal; you don't belong to that sort, you know; you're one of us, though I must say you are not very sociable—indeed, I may say (excuse me), a little stiff.'

"Shut your mouth, if you please."

"Aye?"

"I am painting the lips."

"O, ah, yes! very good, very; he, he, capital, 'pon honour! I must tell that to our fellows—he, he!"

"Soon after this colloquy, or monologue, rather, the artist dismissed his sitter, and his thoughts lingered about the much discussed Edith. To tell the truth, he was not a little piqued that the most famous and spirituelle beauty of the city had never come to his studio, never invited his acquaintance, never even sought to meet him at any of the many reunions among their mutual friends: or even at the soirées given expressly in his honour, and by her own circle.

"It is," said Marzan, to himself, '*un parti pris*. She is too proud to follow the popular current, and she evidently avoids me simply because I am courted by all others. Really, I am curious to see this fabled Edith Manners.'

"His eye at this moment rested upon a large canvass, which had long occupied such leisure hours as he could snatch from the toils of his manifold engagements. Gazing upon the picture, as he turned its face from the wall, an expression of sadness softened his look, and his thoughts flew far away from Edith Manners.

"She must be a paragon, indeed," he mused, "if she can make me forget my little unknown patroness! Shall I never

see her again? Will the fountain never more wear its old sweet smile?"

"The picture upon which he gazed was nothing less than a faithful memory of the scene at the fountain—the interview between Marzan and the young girl, which we have narrated at the beginning of our story. In every respect, it was a glorious production. Indeed, it was the artist's *chef-d'œuvre*, as the public enthusiastically pronounced it when it soon after enriched the Annual Exhibition of the National Academy.

"'Strange!' whispered the curious public, when it was told that the painter kept the work himself, refusing for it almost fabulous prices.

"Mr. Manners, who in the meanwhile had made the artist's acquaintance, sought by every means to possess himself of the picture, without avail.

"'Surely,' said the young misses and the old gossips, 'it must have a history! Marzan is as romantic as he is proud and reserved, and has, no doubt, had more adventures than it pleases him to relate.'

"'Have you never observed,' said Clara B—, 'how much the lad resembles Marzan himself?'

"'And, surely, I have seen the girl somewhere. Who can she be? Dear me, how provoking!' rejoined Julia G—.

"Marzan's motive in exposing his picture of the Smile of the Fountain is of course apparent enough; but it failed in its intent, giving him no clue whatever to the solution of the riddle of his life. The Exhibition closed, the picture came back, and months yet flew by, while no trace could be found of the stranger-lady.

"Marzan's acquaintance with Mr. Manners was followed by repeated invitations to his house, which our hero, however, from some cause, uniformly declined: though at length mere courtesy forbade the right to deny the urgent and personal solicitations

of the gentleman. ‘The party is to be a masque,’ said Mr. Manners. ‘It is a fancy of my wilful child; and, to tell the truth, she is particularly desirous of your company. You must not refuse us.’

“The hour for the much talked of entertainment arrived, and Marzan set forth, though reluctantly, to keep his engagement. If he felt any interest in the affair at all, it was in the promise it gave him of meeting one of whose graces and gifts he had heard so much. Still, this interest was not so marked as to bring the slightest feeling of vexation, when he learned that Edith was too indisposed to receive her guests.

“The evening wore on, with brilliant success. Frederic found no want of occupation. He was an especial favourite with everybody, young and old—with the gay and thoughtless, for his graces and wit, and with the grave and wise, for his sterling worth and wisdom. Many a fair masque greeted him, and sometimes he would be challenged by a whole bevy of madcaps. He played his part well, yet scarcely with the éclat which his reputation promised. In truth, his interest was concentrated upon a fair form, simply clad, gliding hither and thither, and winning but passing notice from any.

“‘Who is yonder solitary lady?’ he vainly asked of all he met.

“After a while, stealing away from the gay groups, he found himself, to his great relief, in a little boudoir at the end of the rich suite of drawing rooms. Much to his surprise, he saw among the decorations of the walls of this fairy bower, several of his own early pictures, which had been purchased in his humbler days by an unknown patron. He was gazing at these surprises—a thousand novel thoughts and fancies crowding his perplexed brain—when a hand was laid softly upon his arm, and, turning quickly, he beheld the figure of the humble masque.

"Are you a lover of art?" she asked, pointing to the pictures.

"As a child loves its mother! Is it not the sunshine and soul of my life?"

"Ah, you are a painter then, sir! How do you like my friend Edith's gallery?"

Frederic shrugged his shoulders, with an unaccountable want of complaisance; but it seemed not rude to the lady, for she laughed gaily.

"Upon my word, you are no courtier," said she. "Certainly, your ungracious verdict cannot grow out of professional jealousy. Come, be honest, and confess that he gives promise —rare promise."

"Certainly," returned Marzan, abstractedly.

"Which he has nobly honoured," continued the lady, "in his famous picture of the Smile of the Fountain, for the works you see before you are from the easel of no humbler artist than Frederic Marzan."

"Do you know," she continued, seeing that her auditor was little disposed to reply, "why the artist so cherishes that picture of the Fountain?"

"Indeed, fair lady, how should I?" answered Marzan, condescending at last to speak. "Some caprice, perhaps, or—"

"Or, perhaps, it may be the loving record of some story of his hidden life. You painters and poets, I know, sometimes, shrinking from fuller expression, indulge in the relief of such vague confidences. The artist, I am told, has traced his own features in the face of the hero; and they say, that his earlier life knew the poverty and struggle expressed in the character. The heroine, too—if, as I doubt not, her portrait be drawn from nature—still remembers, if she ever felt, the Smile of the Fountain."

"No, no!" interrupted Marzan, sadly, "if such a memory

ever interested her heart, it must have been forgotten long ago. Women are too changeable to love so unselfishly or so constantly.'

"'Fie! ungallant masque! Did I know the artist, and know, too, the secret of his picture to be such as my romance has fashioned it, I would tell him that that fair face, his memory has recalled, is the index of a soul earnest and devoted as his own. There are women, sir, who can love from pure and truthful impulses—love, entirely and forever, from impulses at variance with every lesson of selfishness. But men—are they capable of such noble disinterestedness? Your artist here, alas! has most likely forgotten, long ago, the Smile of the Fountain in the more brilliant smiles of flattery and fame. It lives now in his brain, and not in his heart. He remembers it as a graceful theme for the display of his genius.'

"'Madam!' gasped Marzan, impetuously, and as if utterly forgetful of all but one thought, 'do not desecrate the most holy memories by such light words. Spare me, I pray you; I am that Frederic Marzan, and I loved the lady of the Fountain.'

"'And you still love her?' asked the stranger, in a low, tremulous voice.

"'Now and ever! Would that I could find her! And yet, it were better that I should not. Now, she is to me a thought of beauty: to meet her again would be only to kill that sweet memory; to meet her, and find in her eye and heart no reflection of my own mad love.'

"'Folly, sir! Seek her, and you will find a reality more beautiful than your abstraction. Believe me, that if she ever loved you, she——'

"'And why do you speak so confidently? who are you?' asked Marzan, seeking to read the features of the lady through her masque. 'I am mad, no doubt; but your earnest voice

—your merry laugh—I have heard both before! Heard them in my dreams—am I dreaming now? are you——'

"‘An humble girl, not worth your better knowing. My face does not wear your lost smile.’

"‘Still, let me see it! I must see your face.’

"‘If you so much desire it,’ the lady whispered, as she removed her masque.

"‘I knew, I knew it must be so!’ he cried, gathering the light form of the now laughing girl in his passionate embrace. ‘My long-sought treasure! Mine again, and always—however poor and unfriended—however——’

"‘Edith! my daughter!’ exclaimed the astonished Mr. Manners, entering the little room at this surprising juncture.

"‘Edith Manners?’ repeated the scarcely less bewildered artist.

"‘Edith Manners!’ merrily echoed the beautiful girl, and giving him the hand which he had dropped—"Edith Manners, the Smile of the Fountain!"

Mr. Flakewhite here ended his romance, amidst the thanks and congratulations of his audience.

"Rather highfaluted," suggested Mr. Megilp. "Flakewhite must feel relieved, with such a weight off his mind."

"A little agonizing, I admit," remarked the worthy chairman; "yet I shall always look upon the old fountain hereafter with a new and loving interest, even though the association be but imaginary."

"And besides," added Mr. Vermeille, "our book must have thought and fancy of every shade: which it will not lack, if we each express ourselves in our stories as Flakewhite has done. It is not likely that any two of us will think or feel in the same vein. Brownoker, for instance, would have painted the fountain in a very different tone."

"Apropos," said the gentleman just alluded to, "I must tell you—yes, I know that it is getting late, but I will detain you only a few minutes (this was addressed to Mr. Deepredde, as he took out his watch, with a deprecatory look at the speaker)—a little reminiscence of our theme, not quite so intense as Flakewhite's, but equally true.

"Passing through the Park one quiet moonlight night, (will that do for a beginning?) I saw a citizen—whether Mr. Frederic Marzan, or not, I cannot say—gazing fixedly into the fountain, with a face and general expression of hopeless desolation which reasonably enough might have brought to mind the figure of Marius in the dumps at ruined Carthage. He had climbed over the railing, and was perched upon the very brink of the great basin. A few bubbles only fell from the jet to disturb the water, leaving the reflections of all the surroundings unbroken.

"'Good gracious!' soliloquized the watcher, curiously peering into the flood, 'who the deuce has—ger-got into the fer-fountain? I say, you there, ster-stranger, wer-what are you ber-ber—about, in there? That's a de-damp place, my fer-friend! you'll catch ker-cold, I am afraid. I ker-can't hear wh-what he says, but I see his lips me-move. Wh-what an ugly ker-customer he is! Wh-what a sh-shocking te-tile! He must be de-drunk—drunk!

"'I say there—who's ger-got into the fer-fountain? Does yer m-mother know you're ou-out?—I m-mean does she know yu-you're *in*? You mustn't st-stay down there, old ch-chap! Here, I'll l-lend you a h-hand. It sha'n't be ser-said that I d-didn't help a f-fellow creature in der-distress! Steady, now, st-stranger,'—bending forward, and reaching down his arm to aid his submerged companion,—'st-steady, or you'll be up-s-set. Why d-don't you take hold? Now! Aye?—c-can't reach? you're a der-darned fool!

"Decidedly he's d-drunk!" soliloquized the watcher, as he rested a moment from his office as a member of the Humane Society—"d-drunk as the d-l; but—I'll h-help him! Perhaps he's a first-rate f-fellow—he m-must be—he looks a good d-deal like m-me, when I'm excited. Here, old b-boy, take my h-hand!"

"Here Marius, reaching over a little too far, fell forward, and had I not caught him by the tail of his swiftly vanishing coat, he would soon have found out who had 'g-got into the f-fountain!'

"Thank you, my f-friend, you're a—b-brick," he said, as I sat him on his pins again. "You're another s-sort, you are, from that infernal s-scoundrel—d-down there in the f-fountain. When I lent the ugly d-dog a hand, to h-help him out, he p-pulled me in! B-blame me if I ever h-help a f-fellow creature in d-distress again!"

A general laugh, and a general looking for hats, followed Brownoker's "Smile" of the Fountain.







CHAPTER III.

"Now, gentlemen," said the respected chairman to the guests gaily chatting around our blazing fire on the memorably cold night of our next reunion, "if you are comfortably thawed, we will take our seats, and, giving rein to the steeds of Memory and Fancy, prance along upon our journey."

"And where, pray, are we to go to-night?" asked Mr. Brownoker, stumbling, as he turned to say it, upon the tender toes of Mr. Blueblack.

"Go to——"

"Virginia," we hastily added, by way of improving the unpleasant itineraire which Blueblack was evidently marking out for his awkward neighbour.

"A pleasant destination enough, and sufficiently warm even for this wintry night," returned Brownoker. "Always count me in, where the Old Dominion is concerned;" and the united lungs of the company merrily helped him through the chorus of "Carry me back to old Virginny—to old Virginia's shore!"

"Old Virginia's shore!" musingly echoed Mr. Deepredde, when the impromptu burst of melody had subsided—"a noble theme, regarded in any and every light; whether we consider

the adventurous incidents of her early history, the bravery and gallantry of her people, and their signal services to our country in every phase and period of its life; or whether we explore its rich and varied stores of natural beauties and wonders."

"In the abundance and quality of her poetical and romantic reminiscence and suggestion," said Mr. Vermeille, "Virginia is unquestionably the laureate of our sisterhood of nations. She was born of the most gallant and creative spirit, and in the most daring and chivalrous age which the world has ever known —the memorable and mighty days of Elizabeth—herself, if you will, only the hard, unyielding flint, yet magically striking the light of thought and action from all the dormant genius and power which came within the range of her influence. Our queenly State grew up a worthy daughter of her great parentage, and in all her history has evinced, as she still perpetuates, its noble spirit. Her whole story is replete with musings for the poet, and with philosophy for the historian. What a web of romance may yet be woven from the record of the dangers, trials, and hair-breadth 'scapes of her infant life; from the first venture of the restless Raleigh, through all the bold exploits of the gallant Smith, the troublesome diplomacy of the wily Opecacanough, the dangerous jealousy of Powhattan, the plots of the traitorous Bacon, to the thrilling drama of the gentle Indian princess. And again, in older days—in the days of border strife, of bold struggle with the united strategy and cruelty of the French intruder and the vengeful red-skin —she gives us chronicles which, while scarcely yielding in dramatic interest to the incidents of earlier periods, rise higher in the force of moral teachings; while yet again, onward and later, there opens to us the still more thrilling and more lofty story of her mature life, in the proud deeds and grand results of her participation in our eventful Revolution. The be-all

and the end-all of that achievement it is not our place now to ask. Much as the world has seen, and much more as it hopes, of mighty consequence, the stupendous effect is not yet felt, not yet dreamed of, perhaps; but for what has come, and for what will come, to Virginia belongs much of the glory—the glory of striking the first blow, by uniting the colonies in resistance to foreign border encroachment; while the last blow, thirty long struggling years beyond, fell also from her gauntleted hand, when the conquered Cornwallis laid down his shamed sword on the plains of Yorktown. Virginia then led the sounding shout of freedom and empire which has danced in glad echoes over the Alleghanies, skimmed the vast valleys of the Mississippi and the prairies of the great West, crossed the snow-clad peaks of the Rocky Mountains, and kissed the far-off floods of the Pacific—a shout which now, more than ever, fills the rejoicing air, and which must grow in grandeur and melody until it shall exalt and bless the heart of all the earth."

"It was all a mistake, my dear boy," said Brownoker, grasping the hand of the exhausted Vermeille, "all an inexcusable mistake, that you were not yourself born in the shadow of the Blue Ridge! You should have lineally descended from that pretty brunette, Pocahontas, and have figured in the family bible of the first of the first families! Here! light this pipe of Rappahannoc, and give yet another puff to the fair god-daughter of the virgin queen, and to the blessed memory of Sir Walter, for the inestimable gift of the fragrant weed. Truly you have said that the deeds of the 'Old Dominion' supply volumes of romance and philosophy;" and the grave Brownoker dropped into a brown study, and seemed to be rising to the height of the highest argument in each field, fact and fiction, with the dense clouds of smoke which he sent curling above his head.

Vermeille's first impulse, upon this irreverent response to his eloquence, was to extinguish the offender with the "rosy" at his elbow, as the good knight was "put out" by his frightened servant, when all a-fire with the soul of old Virginia. But he thought better of it, and quietly added to his eulogy the suggested puff.

"I forgive your gross raillery," said he, "knowing, as I do, that beneath your seeming earthiness there yet lives the true spirit of poetry."

"Else, my dear Vermeille, should I not, like yourself, and all of us here, spend my life in pursuit of the true and beautiful in Nature and life. We are brothers in feeling, believe me, though our thoughts do not patronize the same tailor. Forgive my interruption, and let us proceed. Who speaks next? 'Old Virginny never tire,' as the poet has it."

"Among the proudest boasts that Virginia may make," said Mr. Flakewhite, picking up the lost thread of the discourse, "is the extraordinary number of great men which she has given to the nation. During half the life-time of the Republic, its highest office has been conferred upon her sons, who have, in turn, nobly reflected back upon the country the honour they have received. Not only has she been mother of many and the greatest of our Presidents, but she has reared leaders for our armies and navies, law-givers for our senates, judges for our tribunals, apostles for our pulpits, poets for our closets, and painters and sculptors for our purest instruction and our highest and most enduring delight. Scanning the map of middle Virginia, the eye is continually arrested by hallowed shrines, the birth-places, the homes, and the graves of those whom the world has most delighted to honour. Here we pause within the classic groves of Monticello, and look abroad upon the scenes amidst which Jefferson so profoundly studied and taught the world. There, in the little village of Hanover, the burning

words of Patrick Henry first awakened the glowing fire of liberty in the bosoms of his countrymen; and here, too, the great Clay was nurtured in that lofty spirit of patriotism from which sprung his high and devoted public service. Not far off, we may bend again, reverently, over the ashes of Madison and Munroe, of Lee and Wirt, and of a host of others whom but to mention would be a fatiguing task.

"Yet there remains unspoken, though not forgetfully, one other name—the first and greatest, not of Virginia only, not of this wide Republic alone, but of the world itself; a name which may well and without other laurel glorify the brow of a nation—the immortal name of Washington! It is among the regrets of my life that, when in Virginia, circumstances denied me the coveted pleasure of visiting the sacred spot which gave birth to the noblest of our race. Some one of our number has, I hope, been more blest than I; and to him I will now give place."

"It is several years ago," said Mr. Blueblack, after a pause, "that I made a pilgrimage into the pleasant fields of Westmoreland, and, upon the sunny banks of the Potomac, mused over the birth-place of Washington. The landscape, in its broad and simple, yet picturesque and genial character—in its spirit of solemn, yet happy quiet—induced reflection admirably harmonious with the temper of him whose life and deeds have cast over it an universal and unfading attraction and beauty. I need not say that the hours flew swiftly, as I recalled all the absorbing pages of that great history, of which the spot was the winning initial letter. Yet, with my pleasure, were mingled some regretful thoughts: meditations upon our want of that feeling of veneration and reverence by which the memory of the past is kept green and its examples and teachings preserved. The destruction of the religious and poetic element under the crushing weight of the rubbish of that gross mate-

rialism which we dignify with the names of practicality and action;—this unlovely phase of our national character was here strikingly evident, in the utter neglect of this the most hallowed spot in our land—a spot which should be adorned by the best efforts of our liberality and our art, and which should be a Mecca to our feet. And yet, of all our millions of people, rarely does a solitary pilgrim seek this holy ground; and not the poorest votive offering, not the simplest monument, marks the spot to recall to ourselves, or to our children, its beautifully suggestive story."

"Do we need such symbols?" asked Mr. Brownoker, "in this rational age, which very properly values and remembers action by its results only? Feeling as we do, everywhere around us, the influences of great virtues and great genius, what matters it to us from whom or from where we have received them. In the dark and ignorant days of the past, monuments and statues may have been public instructors; but we learn by better means. Do they not savour of that spirit of superstition ever akin to ignorance and weakness?"

"It is," resumed Mr. Blueblack, "this very practical tendency, with its disdain for forms, which you command, that makes it of the greater importance to cherish these outward symbols of the inner soul, lest with the one, the other shall cease to be remembered. In the same spirit, you would doubtless pull down the soaring spires which direct our thoughts to heaven, cease the ceremonies of our sacred worship, and trust the preservation of religious and moral principle to the pure conscience of each man alone. But that, alas! may not be. The world is not good and holy enough to dispense with these monitors. Virtuous promptings and reproofs are still of use. If there be weakness confessed, and credulity evinced, in a regard for the forms and draperies of truth, let us still acknowledge that we are not gods, rather than, in losing all

sight and thought of virtue and beauty, show ourselves to be brutes. Besides, it is but just to those whose lives and deeds have blessed us, and to their children forever, that we should acknowledge and reward their services. It is but wise in ourselves to use the incentive to virtuous achievement, which we may find in the remembrance and hope of the honours they win."

"The lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime," suggested Professor Scumble. "Let us, in every possible way, venerate the past, lest the present come, in turn, to dishonour."

"Even denying," said Mr. Flakewhite, "the great moral influence and need of such outward expression of our hearts, as we can make in the employment of monuments and kindred objects, they are still of inestimable value as missionaries of the refining and spiritualizing lessons of art: priceless even as ministers to our intellectual delight; to be dearly cherished if only for the innocent gratification which they bring to the senses."

"Permit me to relate," said Mr. Deepredde, "while I think of it, a little anecdote illustrating the relative respect of our own and other nations for hallowed objects and scenes. The incident occurred while I was once passing down the Potomac. Nearing Mount Vernon, the passengers were, as is customary, informed of the fact by the ringing of the bell, and soon most of them were gathered on the side of the boat. While our own people were gazing with idle curiosity or seeming indifference, some by the expression of their faces seeming to say, as they looked upon the home and tomb of the Father of his Country, 'Well! what of it?' and others, by their looks, evidently thinking the whole thing but a shabby sort of affair: some passengers in the group—French gentlemen—gravely removed their hats and stood uncovered as the boat glided by: a deserved

rebuke, which was keenly felt by every conscious scoffer and careless spectator."

"By the way," added the chairman, turning to us as he finished his story, "is it intentionally, that you have led us to Virginia on this especial night of the memorable twenty-second of February, the anniversary of the chiefest event in her history?"

"Our sermon," we returned, now for the first time producing our picture of the birth-place of Washington, "has singularly enough followed its unknown text. Our choice has been made not accidentally, but with reference to the occasion, and with the thought that it would well follow the ceremonies and reflections of the day."

"An admirable chronicle of the spot," said Mr. Blueblack, as, with all the company, he bent over Mr. Chapman's graphic drawing.

"Let us thank Chapman," said Mr. Vermeille, "for his monument to the birth-place of Washington. It is not very pretending, but yet it will, with its still small voice, speak pleasantly and usefully to many hearts."

"In parenthesis," said Brownoker. "Chapman is himself a Virginian. He has given us a worthy token of his home love, in the picture of the baptism of Pocahontas, in the Rotunda of the Capitol. I could have wished that he had taken the more dramatic story of the rescue of Smith—an event of national interest, upon which turned the destiny of the State; while the baptism, however pleasing an incident, might or might not have occurred, and either way with no particular sequence."

"Apropos, of our picture," said another speaker. "Is it not strange that while Virginia is no less singularly interesting in her physical than in her moral aspect, she has won so little of the attention of our landscapists? Despite the extent and

variety of her scenery, from the alluvial plains of the eastern division, through the picturesque hills and dales of the middle region, onward to the noble summits of the Blue Ridge, with their intervening valleys and mountain streams and waterfalls, the white-cotton umbrella of the artist has scarcely ever been seen to temper its sunshine, except in a few instances of particularly notable interest—as the Natural Bridge, and the grand views near Harper's Ferry. The landscape of Virginia is everywhere suggestive; and, even in the least varied regions, continually rises to the beauty of a fine picture. There are the rich valleys of the James and the Roanoke rivers, said in many of their characteristics to resemble the beautiful scenery of the Loire and the Garonne; and far off, among the hills, are the rushing and plunging waters of the great Kanawha, and the beetling cliffs of New River. Verily, we painters have too much neglected our duties and privileges in this case."

"Too much 'renounced the boundless store of charms which Nature to her votary yields,'" echoed Professor Scumble.

"The brother seems to forget," said Mr. Brownoker, "that the field which we have to cultivate is of vast extent, and that numerous and gifted as are our landscape painters, they have yet scarcely had opportunity to look about them. In due time the forests and fields of Virginia, as of all the land, will find fitting record. That the landscape of the Northern States should first win the study of our artists, is natural enough, if but from the more ready access they have to it—the chief portion of them being gathered in this great centralizing city of New York. At present, the scenery of Virginia is better known to the general traveller than to the artist; which perhaps comes from the social attractions of the famous watering places, and the extraordinary number of eccentricities in the landscape; neither of which are greatly sought by the artist, much and properly so, as they may charm the mere pleasure-

seeking tourist. Every body goes to that wonderful place, the Natural, or, as in its massive grandeur and its strange form it appears to the astonished eye, the Unnatural Bridge; while the most blasé curiosity is always raised in the ghostly halls of the great weird caves—Brownoker will take notice that no pun is intended."

"You seemed," interrupted Mr. Brownoker, "to think the cave weird enough on that unlucky visit we made last summer, when, after much vain effort to get out, we finally laid down to rest and to wait for daylight,—and kept waiting for forty-eight long hours,—waiting, afraid to step, lest we should jump from Scylla to Charybdis—waiting until our anxious friends discovered us, in a rayless nook of the Dragon's rooms, exactly a dozen steps from the entrance and all out-doors! and it is not surprising that the terrible Bridge appeared somewhat *un-natural* to you, when your self-sacrificing gallantry so fatally led you to climb beyond return, after the flower of a certain fair girl's wish, and you hung like the samphire gatherer at his dreadful trade, the laugh, the jest, and riddle of the world—of merry and provoking eyes below you."

"I once," said Mr. Megilp, "had the folly to venture, alone, amidst the dark and dangerous passages of Weir's Cave, and I was lost to the world for four mortal days, during all which dreadful time I was vainly seeking a means of egress. My torches were all burnt out, and I went day after day, and night after night, wandering up and down from one ghostly chamber to another: now thumping my aching head against the pillars of 'Solomon's Temple': now entrapped, apparently past all rescue, in the labyrinth of the 'Lawyer's Office': now whirled around distractedly on the spacious floor of the 'Ball Room': asking a bill of relief in the 'Senate Chamber': making the air vocal with my cries of distress at the base of 'Paganini's Statue': and anon freezing to death in 'Jacob's Well,' with

no vision of a ladder by which to escape. It was a fearful imprisonment, the very recollection of which, even at this remote day, makes my blood run cold. All my garments were torn from my back, and my flesh was horribly lacerated by continual rubs against the sharp angles of the stalactites. I—”

“You must have had a very hard time indeed,” interrupted Blueblack, with an incredulous smile. “How did you manage to live?”

“To live?”

“Yes: what did you find to eat through all that extraordinary four days?”

“Ah, yes! I lived—lived—on fish!”

“Fish! Where did you get them?”

“Get them? Oh, you know—those odd chaps, the eyeless animals—not equal to fresh shad, but still quite tolerable in an emergency—they taste a good deal like—”

“You must make a mistake,” persisted Blueblack. “You could hardly have lived on the eyeless fish, since they are to be found not in Weir's, but in the Great Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. Are you quite sure?”

“Aye, well now, really, perhaps I may be wrong. But the fact is I lived—on something—let me see—but you know, I was so dreadfully alarmed at my extraordinary situation, that I really did not, do not, know how I lived—but that—”

“You are dreaming, is very probable,” said the disbelieving Blueblack. “But come, you have told us a very capital story, and it shall have all the credit it deserves.”

The company, assuring Mr. Megilp that they were not to be sold at so low a rate, rallied him merrily upon the painful exploits of his fancy, and the grave current in which the talk of the evening had thus far run, changed to a strain of light humour and gay recollection; a strain which the reader would no doubt be pleased to follow, were we not inexorably com-

elled to omit the entire record from our minutes, lest we should lack space and time to report the closing episodes of the night. Among these interesting passages was an imaginary peep into the eventful and dangerous life of the early days of Virginia, afforded us by Mr. Blueblack in his touching tale of

Little Emma Munnerlin.

"The hearts of the brave colonists were heavy within them. Misfortunes and afflictions had so thickened upon and crushed them, that they were fain, even, to look askance upon their old friend Hope, so often had Hope cruelly betrayed them.

"At the time of which we speak, the numbers of the little settlement—few at best—were gradually growing less, under the triple scourge of famine, pestilence, and the vengeful hatred of their savage neighbours. The good ship which was daily expected to bring relief to the sufferers, came not. In vain, with each succeeding dawn, did they strain their watchful eyes to catch a glimpse of its distant sails, and turn again in despair to the supplicating faces of their dying friends.

"It needed all the strength and courage of the bravest to support and cheer the weak and desponding; and, happily, brave hearts were not wanting in the hour of trial, though they sometimes came from unexpected quarters. Vapouring strength soon burnt to empty ashes in the fiery furnace of sorrow, and the true heroism blazed forth under its humblest disguises. Among the strong souls which the exigencies of the times developed was that of our heroine, Little Emma Munnerlin, or Little Emma, as she had been always called, not so much from her physical diminutiveness, though she was but a wee thing, as from the quiet gentleness and the tender delicacy of her character. People lamented that a plant so





fragile should not grow in a less rude soil ; yet, as the dainty forest-flower lives unscathed on its Alpine rock, while the giant trees fall prostrate, so our little Emma withstood many storms to which sterner natures succumbed.

"Little Emma lived much among her own quiet thoughts and dreams. She seldom had a great deal to say, and her general humour was more pensive than merry ; yet when tongues were silent, and hearts grew heavy around her, smiles sprang into beautiful life upon her loving lips, and soothing and cheering words fell from them, abundant and grateful as jewelled drops of summer showers.

"Little Emma, in her modest humility, never ventured to question the wisdom even of her mates ; and yet now, when experienced matrons, and bearded men, and hoary-headed men were brought, they scarce knew how, to learn from her counsels, they stood in her simple presence with some such feeling of wondering reverence as that which filled the hearts of the Doctors while listening in the Temple to the preaching of the Holy Child.

"Little Emma was by nature, physically and morally, at most times, extremely timid and sensitive ; all ugly objects, all evil thoughts, all human suffering, brought pain to her delicate soul ; and yet now, no one was found so continually at the couch of the sick and dying, no one so unwearied in her sacrifices, as she. From morn to night, she was the gentle dove bearing the olive-branch of hope from door to door ; and but lately, she had saved the colony, by boldly venturing among the savage tribe into whose hands they had fallen, to exert the powerful influence which she had strangely won over them, through the stern heart of the young chieftain.

"This singular conquest of poor little Emma's had long been as much a matter of fear as of rejoicing to the people ; for while they congratulated themselves upon the protection

which it gave them, they shuddered at thought of the danger to which it might expose the gentle child. And now, when the extraordinary beauty and worth of Little Emma's character was daily growing into the knowledge and the love of the people, they watched with terror the strengthening passion of the savage wooer, trembling lest it might at some time overstep the sacred bounds to which the same power which had inspired had thus far restrained it.

"Great as was the general concern on this score, there was one who, far above all others, was tortured by apprehension and dread—a worthy youth, who had been more prompt than others to discover the charm of Little Emma's nature, or had rather, perhaps, been drawn unconsciously within the spell of its influence; one whose assumed right to advise and guard her, she had never thought to deny.

"Often and earnestly did this privileged friend remonstrate with her upon the rash confidence with which she ventured among her savage admirers, and more especially did he warn her against the danger of her unsuspecting trust of the enamoured chief.

"'It is true,' said he, 'that he possesses a native dignity, chivalry, and refinement of nature unwonted to his people, and strange to all the circumstances and influences under which he has been born and bred—characteristics which his extraordinary esteem for you has wonderfully developed and exalted. Thus far, the truth and depth of his passion—for he loves you with a sincere and pure worship that would do honour to the most Christian soul—has made him the humble and yielding slave to your will; but have a care, my darling, lest he become mad in the tortures of hope delayed, and this same earnestness and truth which, thus far, have been your shield, should turn to your destruction. I tremble when I think of the terrible mine under your feet, and which a single spark of

fancied scorn may spring. Believe me, Emma dear, that you are playing with a sleeping lion.'

"These warnings, often repeated, were not without their effect upon the mind of Little Emma, especially when, as she sometimes did, she thought she discovered a growing expression of restless and angry impatience in the dark eyes and the passionate words of her savage wooer; yet she still continued to meet him freely and frankly when he came, as he often did, to the village—as he had done, indeed, through all his life.

"'What have I to fear?' she said to her own heart; 'and if there is danger, I cannot, to save myself, bring down their fearful vengeance upon all my beloved friends. What is my poor useless life in comparison with the general happiness?'

"At length when, in one of these frequent interviews, Outalissi—so was the chief named—sat by the river-side, at the feet of Gentle-Heart, as in his poetic tongue he called our Little Emma, he told her the story of his love, in a voice so soft yet so earnest, and in words so simple yet so passionate, that her tender heart overflowed with intense interest and sympathy, as she sought to calm his wild emotion, and to teach him how impossible it was for the white dove to mate with the lordly eagle.

"Edward Harrison, the youth of whom we have before spoken, and who of late had never lost sight of his betrothed, had been for some time an unobserved spectator of this scene. He now stood forth, with pallid face and angry eyes. Outalissi started to his feet as he clutched the weapon at his side, and glared upon the intruder with all the savagery of his race.

"Little Emma sprang to cast her shielding arms about her lover, while she bent a reproachful and imploring look upon

the chief. The group stood thus, motionless and voiceless, for some moments, when the Indian, with a bitter and meaning glance, which made the white youth tremble, and sank like ice into the heart of our heroine, turned slowly away, and was soon lost to sight in the darkening depths of the forest

"'This can last no longer,' said Edward, when his speech came back to him, 'happen what may.'

"'No, no!' said the trembling girl, 'we must not madden him, and bring down the anger of his tribe upon our defenceless people, now, when they have so many other afflictions to bear. You must seek him—bring him back, and—'

"'Ha! is it so?' said the lad, with a bitter, unnatural laugh. 'You cannot part with him! He has then stolen away your treacherous heart! You love this—'

"'This—this from you, Edward!' gasped the poor child, stung to the soul by his cruel words. 'He—he might kill me, but he could not be unkind as you.'

"'Forgive me—forgive me, Emma! I did not mean to say that. I was mad, and knew not what I did. But promise me that you will see him no more; promise me this, or—'

"'Do not look upon me so! I cannot bear it! I—I promise!'

"Days passed on, and Oatalissi came back. He met Little Emma in the streets of the village, but she avoided him. He sought her at her own home, but was denied. He sent her messages, but received no answers. A heavy shadow darkened his brow, and chilled the hearts of the affrighted people. Their distress was hourly increasing, and hope and heaven seemed to have deserted them when Little Emma smiled no more.

"As a last struggle against the famine which surrounded them, the best and bravest of the colonists now set forth on a forlorn quest for food. The vague forebodings with which they undertook their dangerous mission proved to be not unreal; for

the last drop seemed poured into the cup of the sufferers at home when the intelligence was brought them, not simply that the errand was fruitless, but that their fathers and brothers and lovers were captives in the strong hands of Outalissi.

"A cry of despair now arose from the hearts of all the devoted villagers, which was soon hushed into a strange expectant stillness when the whisper grew that the exasperated chief refused all ransom for his captives but the willing hand of Little Emma.

"'Save us! Save my father, save my son,—my brother!' was the universal and agonized voice, as the poor people gathered around the devoted girl, when she appeared calm as a statue, but as lifeless and as cold, in their midst. And then other thoughts and emotions rushing into their hearts, they forbade her to leave them, crying, 'We will all die together.'

"With a look as fixed, and a tongue as speechless, as that with which she came, Little Emma went back to her silent home, where she refused all counsel and all companionship.

"The day for the payment of the exacted ransom, when, if it were not made, the captives were doomed to death, approached, and an awful stillness reigned through the stricken village. All resistance was vain, and there was left but one hope—a hope of which they dared not speak or think.

"Painfully and terribly different was the scene in the camp of Outalissi. Here a wild revelry rung through the air, as the delighted savages danced and shouted around their expected victims.

"Casting a last eager but disappointed look into the gathering gloom, Outalissi turned to give the order for the massacre of his captives, when a shrill cry rose above all the mad confusion, and, the next instant, every sound was hushed as a

young girl sprung into the midst of the grim throng and stood before the chief.

"Stay—stay your bloody hands," she cried, "I am yours—release your captives. Ah! Oatalissi, is it thus you woo me?"

"It is well, maiden," he said, and in a few brief words he explained to the captives the terms upon which their lives and safety had been purchased.

"You are free, my brothers," he added, as he took the passive hand of Gentle-Heart in his own.

"Never, wretch!" cried Edward Harrison, as, breaking the thongs by which he was still bound, and snatching the hatchet from the hands of his guard, he sprung towards the chief.

"Stop, stop," shouted Little Emma—"you will but slay us all! He keeps his promise in setting you at liberty, and I—I must keep mine! Go home—go, Edward—go, my father—go, my friends, carry joy with you to many breaking hearts! Pray for, but do not mourn for Little Emma!"

The solemn earnestness of the child's words, and the lofty courage which spoke in her whole air and action, paralyzed the tongues and the hearts of her friends and excited the wondering admiration of the disappointed savages. It was one of those supreme moments, which bring forth all the purest emotions of the human heart; and Oatalissi felt its hallowed spell. With his native nobility and generosity of character, he again took the hand of Little Emma and placed it with a sad smile in that of his rival.

"Gentle-Heart may go back to her own people," said he. "She is too good for Oatalissi!"

I need not speak of the joy of the happy captives, or of the glad greeting which welcomed their triumphant return. Still less need I tell you how Oatalissi faithfully protected Gentle-Heart and her people, for natures like his err only for a moment; or of the sunshine which lighted the after life of

Little Emma, for such souls as hers live always in sunshine—the sunshine of their own pure and beautiful thoughts."

We must omit the record of the congratulations and comments which followed Blueblack's deeply affecting narrative, further than to mention a remark with which Mr. Brownoker introduced another and gayer story.

"I have a high respect for 'Little Emma,'" said that gentleman, "but I must protest against such agonizing histories, when one has no handkerchief in his pocket. I can give you a much more cheerful reminiscence of Virginia, if you would like to hear it, as of course you would—don't shake your heads, for you must submit. My heroine is another kind of young person from Blueblack's, but then you know it takes all sorts of people to make a world. 'Tis a little personal adventure—happened on a visit to the Springs. I call it

Tom, Dick, and Harry.

"Dick Bones was about to be married, and I was on the road to the fu—— the wedding I mean. The affair was to come off at the White Sulphur Springs. I looked over the way-bill before stepping into the coach: found only one passenger—Brown; but who the deuce Brown was, didn't know—didn't want to know: plump'd myself down on the back seat—and a bundle, which bundle on inspection proved to be Brown in person and in a passion—said 'How are you?' to him: don't like to repeat what he said to me in reply. Tried to sleep, but what with the everlasting jolting over the hills—Byron was right in saying, 'High mountains are a feeling'—

and Brown's distressing dreams of a certain faithless Jemima, couldn't manage it.

"'She never loved me!' muttered Brown.

"'Served you right,' said I.

"'Peace, peace, weary heart!' he continued.

"'Yes, peace, peace, for heaven's sake,' I answered. But there was no peace till morn, when, just as I was wondering what 'perilous stuff' was weighing upon the heart of my fellow traveller, I caught a glimpse of his sad phiz, and to my amazement recognized my old, long-absent friend, Harry, who, as it turned out, was, like myself, going to 'assist' at the sacrifice of our mutual crony, Dick Bones.

"'Alas, poor Dick!' said I, as the conversation turned upon the fate of our friend. 'This is a world of vicissitudes; who would have thought it?'

"'Cut down in the flower of his youth!' said Harry, with a commiserating sigh.

"'Verily, we know not what an hour or a day may bring forth,' I answered. 'Even you, Harry—you, the high priest of our bachelor faith, are not secure. Some treacherous Jemima—'

"'Jemima!' cried Harry, with a look of conscious guilt that confirmed my suspicions of his backsliding.

"'May yet come to break your virtuous rest and disturb your innocent dreams.'

"'Did I dream last night, Tom, and aloud?'

"'Very loud, about—'

"'Say no more, Tom—I own up! I have been weak, but it's all over, long ago, and Harry is himself again. But the temptation was great—so were Brown's sighs, as he continued. 'The beauty and graces of my Jemima might have tried the sternest virtue; and when she persuaded me that her dainty heart was all my own, and that she could live only in the light of my dear love, what could I do but—'

"'Think it all gammon, as became the spirit of your bachelor creed.'

"'As it all proved, indeed, to be; for when, on my recent return from China, whither I went to win a fortune for the darling girl, I rushed to receive her welcoming embrace, what should I learn but that, while writing everlasting fidelity to me, she had been talking devoted love to another, and at that moment was dying for a third happy man—some richer prize than either myself or my unknown fellow sufferer. She and her innocent victim, whom she is soon to marry, are now, I am told, at the Springs, where we may have the pleasure of meeting them.'

"'And this, then, Harry, is your heroic recantation of error!' said I; but I had not the impudence to rally my poor friend very severely, not being myself too strongly armed in honesty; for the fact is, I, too, had once fancied myself the light and life of a Jemima's soul, only to find myself put out, as I might have expected, by the first brighter luminary which crossed the Jemima orbit. All this I generously confessed to Harry, much to his delight and comfort; and we talked for hours about the vanity of women and the fallacy of love, rejoicing at our own lucky escape from their insidious snares, mourning over the mad credulity of our benighted friend, Dick, and becoming more inexorable bigots in the bachelor faith than ever. Promising ourselves no little amusement in rejoining our fickle goddesses at the Springs—for there, too, I expected to find *my* Jemima—the day wore on, and our journey came to an end.

"We arrived, fortunately, in season to greet and rally our devoted friend, Dick, before the hour of sacrifice. We did not spare the fellow, I assure you; indeed, we were the more imper-

turbable and complacent smile. ‘But let me tell you, scoffers as you are, that if the time has not yet come, it may come, when each of you will have

“—— some plan
To win himself a loving wife,
And be a married man.”

When that hour does come, I only hope that you will find as beautiful and pure a shrine at which to confess your sins as I have. But come, I must present you to my jewel. It will be a pleasant surprise to her, for you must know that Jemima is acquainted with you both.’

“‘Jemima again!’ I exclaimed.

“‘Jemima!’ echoed Harry.

“‘Jemima know me!’ cried both of us.

“‘Come, come along, boys!’ interrupted Dick impatiently, dragging us towards a gay circle, and presenting us to its bright particular star.

“‘Jemima, my love, I have the unexpected pleasure to bring you our old friends, Tom and Harry.’

“As the lady turned to greet us, I stood petrified at discovering the very Jemima of my own love, and looking round at the sound of a stifled laugh at my elbow, I found Harry Brown choking with glee.

“Harry looked at me, and I looked at Harry, and we both looked at Dick, and Dick looked at Jemima, and Jemima looked at all of us, and a more striking tableau, altogether, it would be very difficult to imagine!

“‘Aye, how?’ said Dick at last, nervously. ‘What does all this mean, boys?’

“‘That the lady should have been off with the old love before being on with the new,’ said I.

“‘That she should, pursuant to promise, have died long

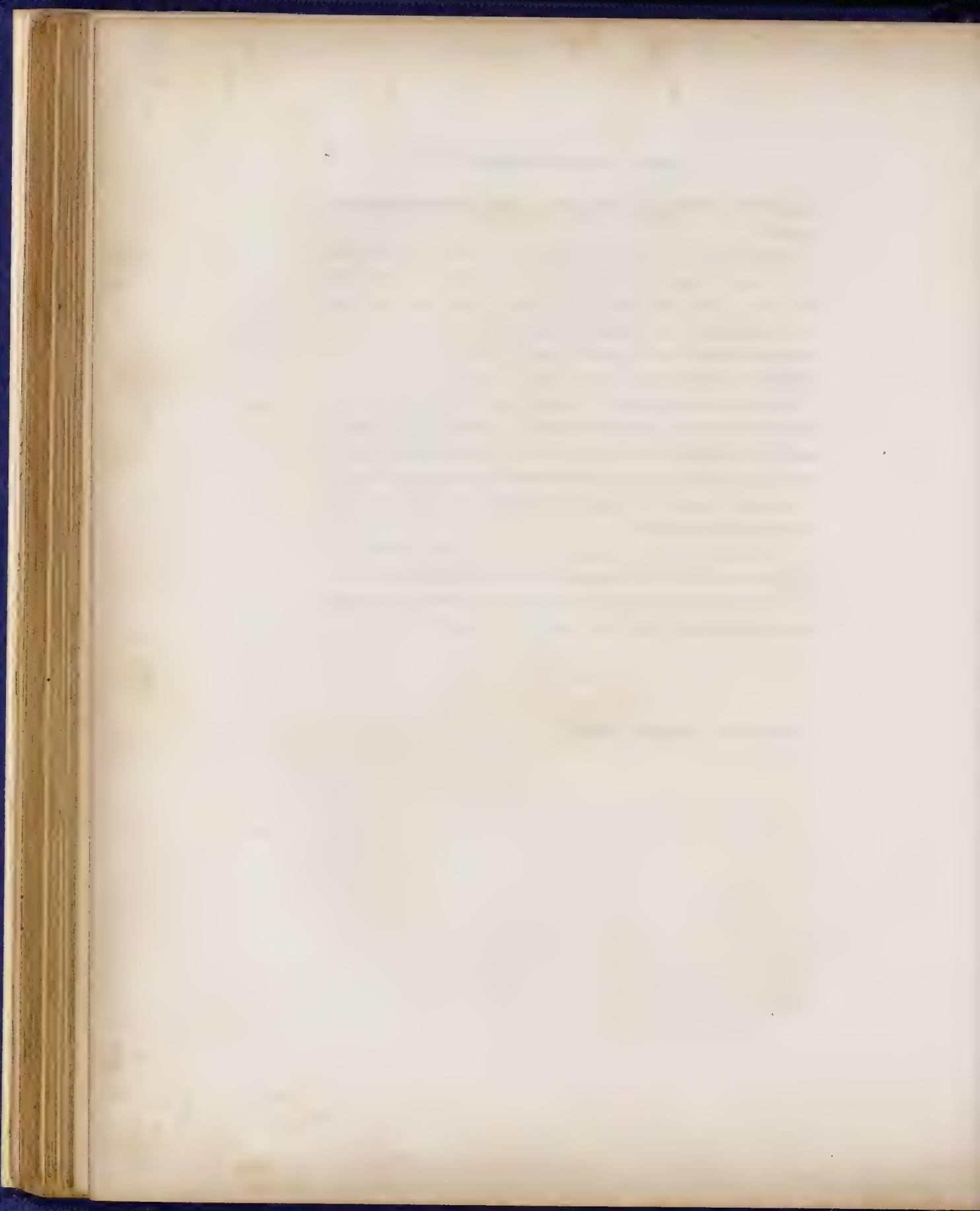
ago, all for the love of poor Harry Brown,' said my travelling friend.

"But the scene which followed was entirely too dramatic for my poor powers of description; and I will simply add, that Dick very soon saw through the whole affair, and the bride elect was given to understand that he was not generous enough to content himself with a third place in her heart, and was too unselfish to stand in the way of his old friends!"

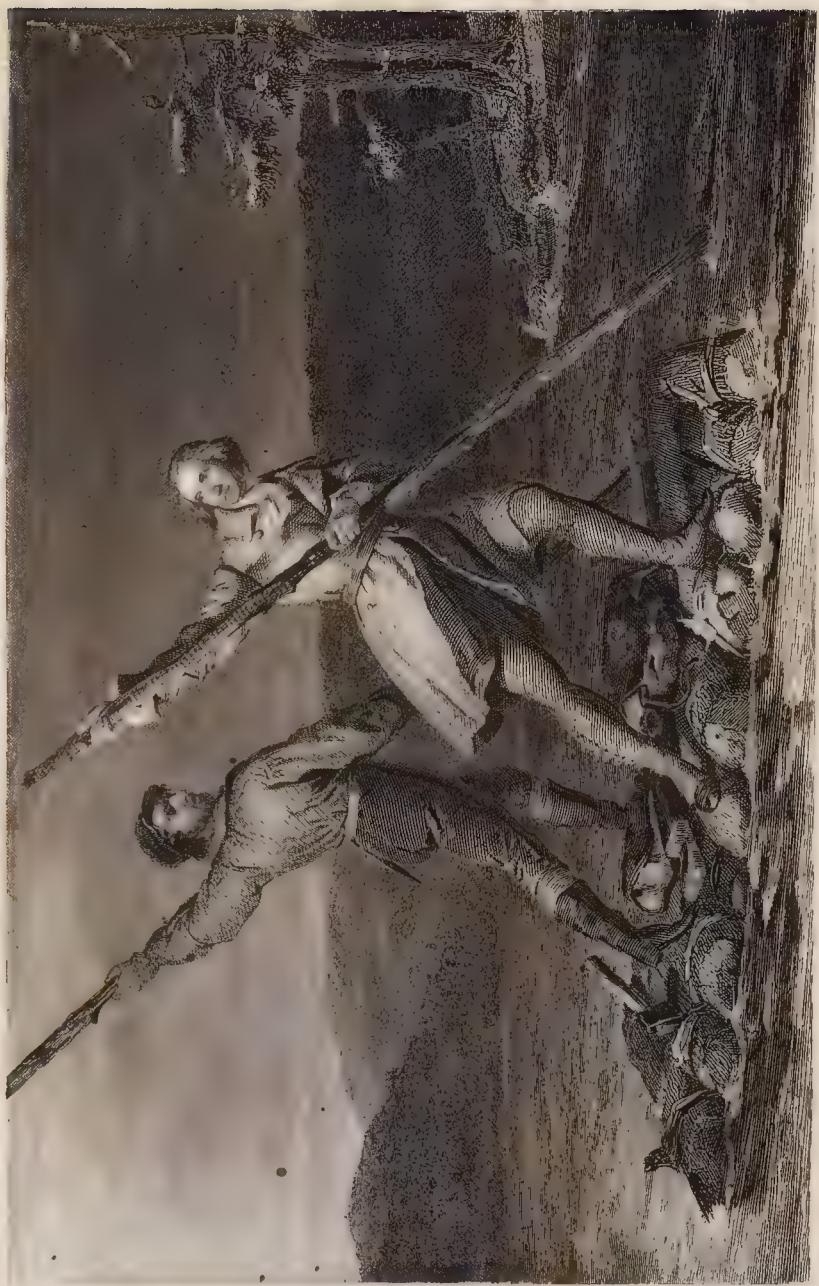
"The match was broken off, and from that day to this our glorious triumvirate of bachelors has continued intact and invincible; so much so that we are known among our acquaintances by the soubriquet of the Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of celibates, having all passed through the burning fiery furnace of love unscathed.

"You will, perhaps, suppose that with this triple weight of blighted affection on her memory, Jemima soon died of a broken heart, but I assure you that she is still alive and as ready as ever for a first, fresh, and undying affection."

On motion, meeting adjourned.







CHAPTER IV.

HAVING expressed a fear that our friends would grow weary of their self-imposed task, and most heartily wish our book at the—printers, we were cheered by a unanimous assurance of a deep and increasing interest in our reunions.

"We need," said Mr. Deepredde, gravely, "in our profession, as in all, and indeed in our whole social economy, more such fraternal association. It is the moral and intellectual sunshine which warms the hidden germ of thought into life, and matures it into the most thorough and successful achievement. It is, in its multiform applications and uses, the lever which, of all others, must pry our poor sunken world out of its quagmire of ignorance and evil, and bring about—if it is ever to be brought about—the much talked of perfectibility of our race."

"It strengthens those bonds of mutual esteem and love," added Mr. Flakewhite, "which smooth the rude places in our path, and make us hopeful and daring in the armour of the assured sympathy and appreciation of our confrères. How much more should we painters not do, if there dwelt between us that brotherly love which filled the soul of Gainsborough, when he

joyfully exclaimed to the friends gathered about his dying couch, ‘We are all going to Heaven, and Vandyke will be of the party!’”

“At any rate,” said Brownoker, “such reunions as ours, whatever they may be more æsthetically considered, are invaluable, if but for the pleasure they bring while they last. They cheer the present hour, and if we could be rational enough to content ourselves with this power, always within the reach, of enjoying the present moment, without, like the silly pendulum in the fable, burthening it with the thought of labours and trials not yet arrived, the aggregate would be a life-time of gladness. How the mountain of our miseries would sink, would we but cease to throw upon it the sorrows of the past, which we cannot recall, and the fears of the future, which is beyond our foresight or control.”

“Well, gentlemen,” resumed Mr. Deepredde, as he sought to make himself more permanently comfortable in his chair of state, “now that we have satisfied ourselves that it is good for us to be here, let us convince our readers that it is salutary for them also, by continuing the special discourse for which they have so kindly yielded to us their patient buttons. Spread out your map, my dear host, and let us define our position.”

“We have one more tramp to make in the Old Dominion, as we follow Washington through the icy floods of the Alleghany,” we replied, producing Mr. Huntington’s picture of that memorable adventure.

The members having duly studied the sketch of the evening, unanimously called upon the chairman for a resumé of the cause, course, and consequence of the event which it recorded.

“The incident which our picture commemorates,” said Mr. Deepredde, “had a great effect upon the fortunes of our country, and was very significant of that high principle in the character of Washington—his conscientiousness and lofty respect

for duty—from which chiefly sprung the virtues and successes of his life. It may be less tedious, perhaps, if I make my narrative in the fashion of a romance."

A general cry of approval followed this suggestion, and the entire table seemed not a little curious to witness the débüt of the grave chairman on the treacherous stage of fiction.

"Pray don't drown yourself in pathos," said Brownoker, laughingly.

"Or disappear in the mystic labyrinth of plot and strategy," added Vermeille.

"Or kill us outright," continued Flakewhite, "by being, like Holmes, as 'funny as you can.'"

"Above all be truthful, and do not exceed sober fact," added the conscientious Megilp.

"Gentlemen," said the afflicted novelist elect, "you must expect neither pathos, plot, humour, nor dramatic effect from me. They are not in my line. The truth, however, you shall have—and it seems to me a truth worth treasuring—which we may read in the story of

The Alleghany; or, The Man of Duty.

All tongues were hushed, and an unwonted gravity spread over the company, as Mr. Deepredde thus solemnly and ominously announced his text. The general breathing, however, was more free when he thus began:—

"A hundred years have gone since the incidents which I am about to narrate transpired: a long, long lapse, gentlemen, in our country's brief life, and full of changes as the interval between childhood and manhood.

"Gazing pensively into the passing floods of the Rappa-

hannoc, as if asking of the murmuring waters the story of her future life, sat a fair maiden, apparently of some sixteen tender summers.

"Would he leave me thus," said she, "if indeed he loved me? Does true love bend to any stronger passion? He talks to me of honour and duty! What is honour, what is duty, when—"

"Here the soliloquist abruptly stopped, as a bounding step broke the quiet of the still night, and brought a stalwart and handsome youth to her side.

"Honour and duty, my dear Martha," said the lad, bending over her with an expression of kind yet grave reproof, "are, not the rivals but the kindred of love. It would be a joy indeed for me to be always near you, but that may not be. Life has its labours and its sacrifices, in the manly and honest discharge of which we may earn a generous relish for its pleasures."

"And *must* you go then, dear George? What is the necessity for this dangerous and wearisome expedition? Why cannot some other perform the task as well as you?"

"Ah! do not tempt me! You do not speak with your characteristic generosity. Remember that the welfare of our country demands the labour and services of all her sons, and of her daughters, too," he added, kissing her fair brow; "and your only feeling on the subject should be one of pride that our worthy Governor has honoured me with so important a trust."

"I am proud," said the girl, "of the high confidence reposed in you, and I am sure that you will prove yourself in all ways deserving of it. Heaven will protect you, and bring you back to me in safety. I have been told many stories, before the present, of your brave obedience to the calls of duty, and such a trait cannot but lead to success and happiness in

life. But not to-morrow, George—you do not go to-morrow? You will give me one more day?"

"To-morrow, Martha, at dawn, we must begin our march. The journey through the wilderness will be long, and it is important to the colony that we reach the French posts on the Ohio without unnecessary delay, that we may seasonably check their ambitious and aggressive schemes to hem us in on this side of the mountains."

"And have we not room enough?"

"Plenty, at present," laughed the lad; "but a hundred years hence, we shall stretch our giant arms far beyond the Ohio—perhaps even to the distant waters of the Pacific. Who can read the destiny of this new and aspiring land?"

"Well, well," sighed the young girl. "I do not quite understand these things, but I can sympathize with your enthusiasm and your courage, and I will pray earnestly for your success."

"Long and lovingly did the youthful pair stroll up and down the noiseless river banks, until the lapse of time compelled the lad to guide his betrothed to her home hard by, and to seek that repose he himself so much needed before repairing to Williamsburg, to receive his instructions and commence his perilous explorations.

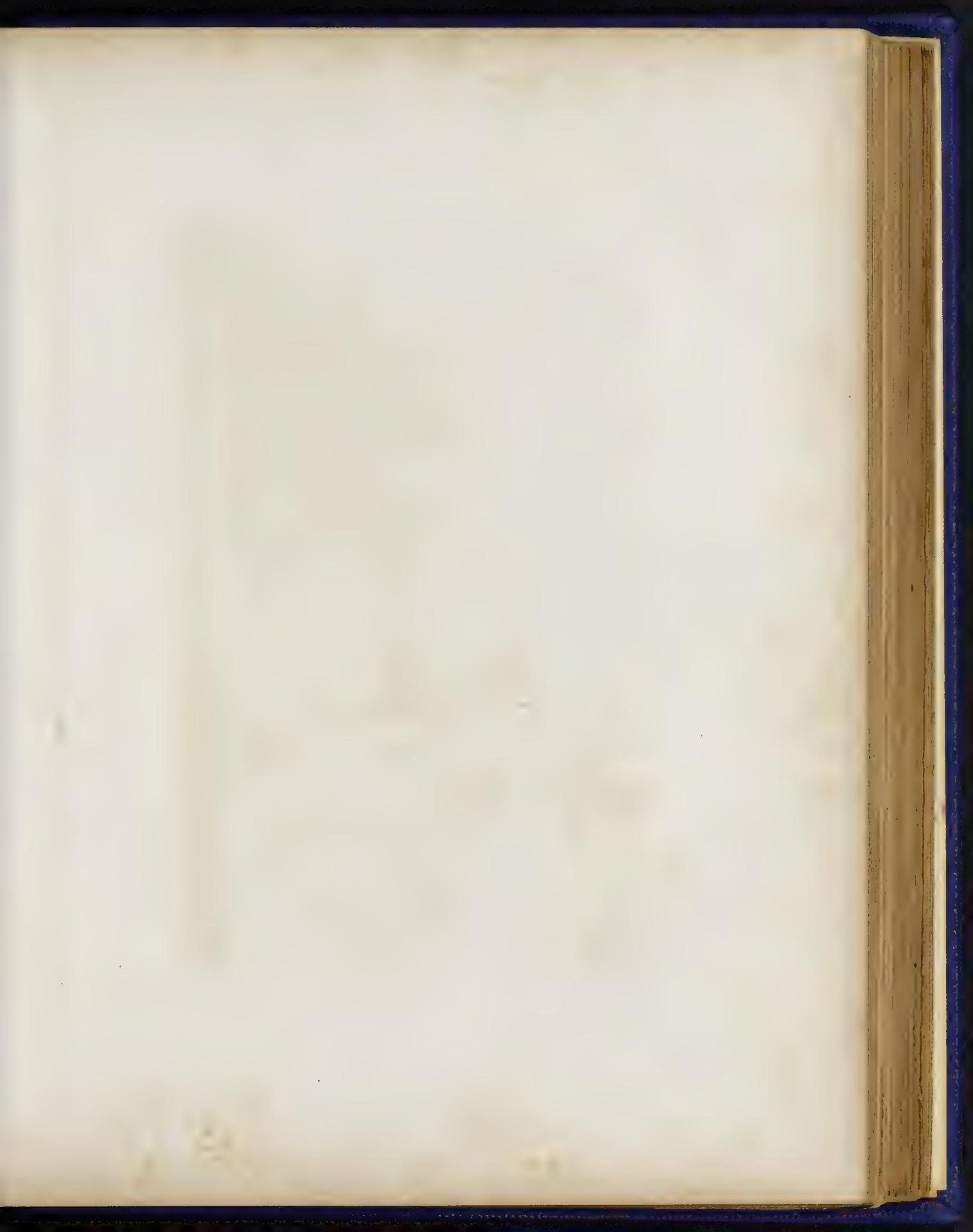
"On the following morning, the 31st of November, 1753, a morning which, happily, was auspicious in its brightness, the good Governor Dinwiddie and the people of Williamsburg gave our adventurer God speed, and he set out with his few companions on his dreary traverse of the great untrodden wilderness. Those who pass, at the present day, over the route which our young ambassador pursued, will scarcely infer from its condition now, the dangers which then beset it; with no path but the rough guidance of the compass, and with no inhabitants but wild beasts and scarcely less wild savages.

"During the first fortnight, the little party traversed alternate forest and settlement, passing over the ground where now stand Fredericksburg, Alexandria, and Winchester. At the expiration of this period, they reached the last verge of civilization, at the junction of Wills' Creek and the Potomac, now occupied by the busy streets of Cumberland, in Maryland. At this period, the spot was marked by the poor settlement only of the famous hunter, Christopher Gist. Here our travellers proposed to halt for slight repose, and to increase the strength of their party by the enrolment of some Indian guides, and more especially with the good companionship of the stout old Kit himself. They had not, thus far, entered upon the more toilsome and hazardous part of their journey; and yet the eyes, even of the veterans of the expedition, brightened, as they descried the curling smoke of the hunter's cabin, and as the delight of human intercourse beyond the range of their own circle came again within their reach.

"'Well, say no more on that point, my boys; I give in. It's rather hard to leave the old woman and the youngsters, low as they are, just now, with this cussed fever, but since you say the thing is important—and, to tell the truth, I've been a good deal of that way of thinking for some time past—I'm at your service. But it's no child's errand you are going on. Them mountain peaks can't be got over in kid slippers any time, and just now a hard winter is coming on us: the ground is already covered with snow, and the rivers and creeks are big enough to show pretty strong fight.'

"'We do not expect a pleasure trip, good Christopher, and whatever we might do alone, certainly in your company we shall not turn cowards.'

"'Well said, my lads. These are no times for dainty gentlemen, and I'm glad to see you so ready and hearty to serve your country. And, as I was saying just now, you are none





too soon. These cussed Frenchmen will steal a march on us if we don't keep a bright eye, and a strong hand too, on 'em. I havn't been at the settlement lately, but I've heer'd from some of my red-skins, whom I can trust—and you can't trust many on 'em—they're mighty slippery; that that shrewd old villain, St. Pierre—though I must say for him he's dreadful civil spoken—is making a powerful wigwam of that old fort, Le Bœuf; his people is winding themselves down from Canada and up from Louisiana; and before we know it, they'll join hands from north to south, and dance a jig around his majesty's colonies to a tune it will be terrible onpleasant to hear.'

"'That is the opinion of the Governor and his Council,' said our minister, 'and, since we are by ourselves, I will tell you that my errand is to check this progress of the French; first, by politely telling your civil friend St. Pierre that his room is more desirable than his company, and next, should he not accept my invitation to return home, to learn the best way of making him do so. To accomplish this, I need your assistance, not only to reach the Fort at the earliest moment, but to inform myself of the strength of the enemy in every way, and, above all, to secure the good-will of the Indians.'

"'We'll soon get to the old dog's kennel, and see what bones he's got to live on; but as to the red-skins, as I told you, they can't be trusted; though of the two, I rather think they like our people the best; still they're not such fools that they can't see that between both sides they may lose everything themselves. An old warrior asked me once, if the French were to hold all the lands west of the Alleghanies, and the English all to the eastward, what then would be left for him?'

"'A difficult question to answer, certainly,' said our traveller, laughing, 'but we must secure their friendship in the best way we can. Where is Tanacharison now?'

"We shall probably find him near Logstown, which will be the best place to assemble the chiefs. But we must be careful: St. Pierre will hear of us long before he sees us. His spies are about thick as copper-heads, and about as troublesome to meet, too."

"We'll be a match for them," said our traveller, cheerily, "and now, good Christopher, you, not less than the rest of us, must lay in some supply of sleep before morning."

After thus dismissing his council of travel, our young hero, wakeful in his anxiety and earnestness, stole out of the cabin, and for a long while paced thoughtfully up and down the half-cleared space in front. In the midst of his meditations his quick ear caught the sound of a stealthy step, and, turning abruptly, he descried the figure of an approaching Indian.

"What does my brother want?" he quietly asked, not, however, without grasping his sword in a not very brotherly manner.

"Messiker is a friend to the white chief," said the red man; "he comes from the great wigwam."

"And what news does my brother bring?"

"He comes to tell the brave that his white rose is fading."

"Ah! what new trial is this!" said the traveller, in a faltering voice, his thoughts flying back to the weeping girl he had left on the banks of the Rappahannoc. But he seemed to grow reassured, when, after closely questioning the messenger, he was led to doubt the truth of his alarming reports.

"Perhaps," ran his thought, "the fellow is but an emissary of St. Pierre, seeking to defeat or to delay my mission. My poor Martha! Would that I could return to her! But no, that may not be; duty calls me, and I must, at all sacrifice, obey, trusting to heaven to protect her and me;" and, recovering his habitual grave composure, the Man of Duty, conquering

this new temptation, dismissed the pretended envoy, and sought new strength in the sure panacea of sleep.

"When our hero mentioned the visit of Messiker to his trusty companion, Gist, as the party pursued their rude way through the forest on the following day, old Christopher saw nothing to fear in his story beyond the intimation which he thought it gave that, even here, their movements were watched by their vigilant foes.

"I need not pause to describe our adventurer's weary days of painful travel, his privations and sufferings in the wild winter forests, and his continual exposure to the cruelty and treachery of the savage red-men, since all these things are matters of written history; no less, the successful assembling of the Indian chieftains, and the conferences which secured their promised friendship.

"Suffice it to say, that, emboldened and sustained by his convictions of duty, our hero gallantly braved and conquered every obstacle and danger until his journey was accomplished, and he found himself the honoured guest of the redoubtable Monsieur le Gardeur de St. Pierre, knight of the Order of St. Louis, and commandant of his French Majesty's forces on the Ohio.

"The kind hospitality and the refined social pleasures of Fort Le Bœuf, were as grateful to our travellers as they were unexpected in this remote and wild region. Monsieur de St. Pierre and his family had brought with them into the wilderness all the graces of their native land—graces attractive enough in their ordinary influence, but dangerously seductive when exerted to aid the accomplishment of a much-desired end.

"But all the pleasures of the commandant's household, his own solicitous regard, and the flattering persuasions of the ladies, were powerless to detain our ambassador an instant from the path which his sense of duty marked out. His mission

achieved, he turned a deaf ear to all solicitations to protract his stay, and to all the representations of the increased dangers of a return through the forests. That these representations were not unfounded in truth, he was persuaded by the unsatisfactory result of his mission, and the evident desire of the commandant to delay and obstruct his return. This conviction made him more eager to execute his task.

"Bidding adieu to his host, in all apparent kindness and confidence, he sallied forth again under his banner of duty to brave the peril of the woods and the snares of hidden foes. From both, as from a thousand dangers in after life, he was so marvellously shielded, that the superstitious foresters learned to look upon him as under the special protection and love of the Great Spirit.

"It was on this returning voyage that the famous passage of the Alleghany, depicted in our sketch, was achieved. To facilitate their progress, the party had separated, some taking charge of the horses and baggage, and our hero, with his staunch guide, Kit, courageously venturing into the forest alone. Coming to the waters of the Alleghany at night, their expectation of crossing readily on the ice was sadly disappointed on finding the river frozen but a few feet beyond the shores. In the emergency, they set about constructing a raft, on which frail craft they trusted themselves and their fortunes, with the resolution of all the Cæsars, to the angry current. But the current, like everything else, was resolved to thwart their purpose, and, in the effort to stem its strength, they were plunged into the rapid floods. With desperate struggles, they at length reached a rocky island in the middle of the stream, where, in cold and darkness, they patiently awaited the dawn, when they were happily enabled to reach the opposite bank, on the ice which the severe frost of the night had formed.

"In the midst of such trials and perils, our hero accom-

plished his arduous mission across the Alleghanies, and gave the first proof to the world of that unconquerable strength and integrity of character, that self-sacrificing love of right and respect for duty, which afterwards, in more lofty displays, so often and so greatly served the happiness and glory of his country, and which has embalmed his name as a blessing in the everlasting memory of mankind.

"In conclusion," resumed Mr. Deepredde, "I will, instead of stealing your time with the idle story of our hero's happy return to Williamsburg, and the honours showered upon him by the government and the people——"

"To say nothing," interrupted Mr. Flakewhite, "about the loving greeting from certain tearful eyes, which were promising enough at the beginning of your story, but have been too much overlooked since——"

"All that," continued the chairman, "can be more easily imagined than described—at least by my prosaic tongue—so, as I was saying, when the 'tearful eyes' put me out, I will simply add a word of historic moral, in telling you that this memorable expedition, which I have described to you in such light style, united the colonies in that friendly union which soon successfully resisted the border encroachments of the French power, and years afterwards grew into the strength which released them from the oppressive weight of foreign rule. Bancroft—hand me that volume of Bancroft, my dear Asphaltum—speaking of the border war which immediately followed the Alleghany expedition, tells us that the first gun then fired at the command of Washington kindled the world into a flame. 'It was,' he writes, 'the signal for the first great war of Revolution. There in the Western forest began the battle which was to banish from the soil and neighbourhood of our Republic the institutions of the middle age, and to inflict on them fatal wounds throughout the continent of Europe. In repelling

France from the basin of the Ohio, Washington broke the repose of mankind, and waked a struggle which could admit of a truce only when the ancient bulwarks of Catholic legitimacy were thrown down.' That's all, gentlemen," added the chairman, closing his book and his lips at the same time.

"Deepredde might have made his story more interesting," said Mr. Flakewhite, "and at the same time might have added a higher light to the picture of his hero's stoical virtue in withdrawing so doggedly from the social pleasures of Monsieur de St. Pierre's family, if he had told us something of the bewitching smiles of the old commandant's daughter, the beautiful Gabrielle."

"Gabrielle de St. Pierre," said the astounded chairman. "Upon my word, I did not know that the commandant had a daughter. I do not recollect ever to have seen her name in Bancroft, or Hildreth, or—"

"Perhaps not; but you may read it, by and by, in 'Flakewhite,' for I am going to put on record the true and touching history of the belle of Le Bœuf—

Gabrielle de St. Pierre.

"We will begin, gentlemen, by drinking to the memory of the fair Gabrielle. If she had lived at the present day, when books occupy so much of the time of her sex, she might have been called a strong-minded woman—living when she did, she was simply a clear-headed, brave-hearted girl, intensely despising the frivolous life to which the habits and conventions of French society condemned her, and fearlessly asserting and

maintaining her right to think and act as she herself best pleased.

"Thus it is not to be wondered at that when her indulgent papa was ordered to breathe the pure and free airs of the Western forest, her filial affection and her love of liberty made her the determined partner of his exile—not to mention the strong desire to get away from the annoying devotions of a certain enamoured cousin, whom she abominated the more intensely because her friends were determined to force him upon her. However much she might have loved him if left to herself—for he was a very good sort of fellow—she now perfectly detested the very sight of him.

"This change of scene and circumstance happened at the best possible moment for a temperament like Mademoiselle Gabrielle's: at a moment when she was best prepared to profit by all its good influences, and to escape its dangers; not before she had seen and learned enough of the graces and refinements of polished life, to keep her above the rude habits and manners of the uncultured foresters, and just in time to turn the strong imaginative and romantic tendency of her nature from an idle and corroding sentimentalism, into a deep and pure current of healthy poetic feeling. Here, in the solemn ministrations of God's first temples—the grand primeval forests—and amidst the dangers and privations with which she had to contend, she grew up a thoughtful and truthful spirit, with earnest and daring purpose; while a longer breathing of the poisoned and demoralizing atmosphere of the court of Louis, might have degraded her into a reckless and unscrupulous woman of fashion and intrigue.

"The character of our heroine was thus happily developing at the moment our story opens.

"The gathering shades of night were deepening the spirit of quiet which always surrounded the little fortress of Le Bœuf,

on the wild banks of the far-off Ohio, as the eyes of a small party of way-worn and weary wanderers grew bright with hope at the first glimpse of its hospitable walls.

"'There,' said an old veteran, who appeared to be the guide of the party, 'is the lion's den. You must have a care of his paws, my lads.'

"'Never fear, good Christopher,' replied the leader of the group, a tall, handsome youth, who seemed but little given himself to fear, 'the watchful Providence which has brought us thus far through all the dangers of the wilderness will protect us to the end.'

"The faith of the speaker proved, even as the words fell from his lips, to be well grounded. An arrow, aimed at him by a stealthy hand, not before seen in the dusky recesses of the woods, was suddenly and opportunely struck aside, and the momentary apparition of a lurking foe was followed by the strange appearance of a young and beautiful girl. So unexpectedly did she come, and so quickly disappear, pausing only to bestow a reproving look and word upon the treacherous savage, that our travellers scarcely knew whether to consider her a real visitant, or a pleasing deceit of their fancies.

"'Another lucky escape, my dear George,' said young Fairfax. 'Truly, heaven seems to love you, sending down its angels in propria personæ for your protection. Who can the dear fairy be?'

"'Some member of the Governor's household, I suppose,' said the leader, 'whom he has suffered to grow wild in this untamed land.'

"'She has, at least, learned to be generous and daring,' continued Fairfax. 'You owe her your life, and if you were not already pledged to the fair Ma—'

"'Nonsense, Harry! I thank the girl heartily, but I have graver thoughts to occupy my mind than the silly whispers of

every passing romance. I leave it to you, better fitted for such things, to seek amusement and pleasure in following up the adventure.'

"'Thank you. If the girl has wit and wisdom equal to her bravery and beauty, I shall not, I promise you, be in any great haste to recross the rugged Alleghanies. While you are discussing the subject of your belligerent mission with the commandant of Le Bœuf yonder, and persuading him that it will be better for his political health to pull up stakes and remove with his people far away from the Ohio, and the vicinage of our good Governor Dinwiddie, I may find it agreeable to make war upon the heart of this mountain sprite.'

"'Suppose, Harry,' answered his friend, laughing, 'suppose you carry her back with us, as a hostage for the faith of these slippery Frenchmen!'

"With such cheerful chat and jest, the party at length passed the sentinels and entered the precincts of the lonely fort, where they were cordially greeted by the expectant host, Monsieur le Gardeur de St. Pierre.

"'I am happy, gentlemen,' said the courteous Frenchman, 'to congratulate you upon the safe termination of your fatiguing and hazardous journey, and to welcome you to my humble quarters, which I trust will long be cheered by the pleasures of your society. I hope you bring me good news from Virginia, Mr. Washington, and pleasant messages from your excellent Governor, my old friend, Dinwiddie; your young companion——'

"'Mr. Fairfax,' interrupted our ambassador, as he introduced his colleague.

"'Must forget the privations of the forest as much as possible in such poor pleasures as he may be able to find in our rough home. Ah! my old friend Gist, too. I am glad to shake your hardy honest hand once more! But pardon me, I

must present you to the ladies,' he continued, summoning an attendant.

"Tell Madame that our expected guests have arrived, and send Mademoiselle Gabrielle to me, if she has returned to the Fort. My wild daughter, gentlemen, will give you a cordial welcome, for she sees but too little society suited to her station and education. It is surprising that you should not already have made her acquaintance. Few things happen here of which she is not the first informed, and such an unusual event as your approach——'

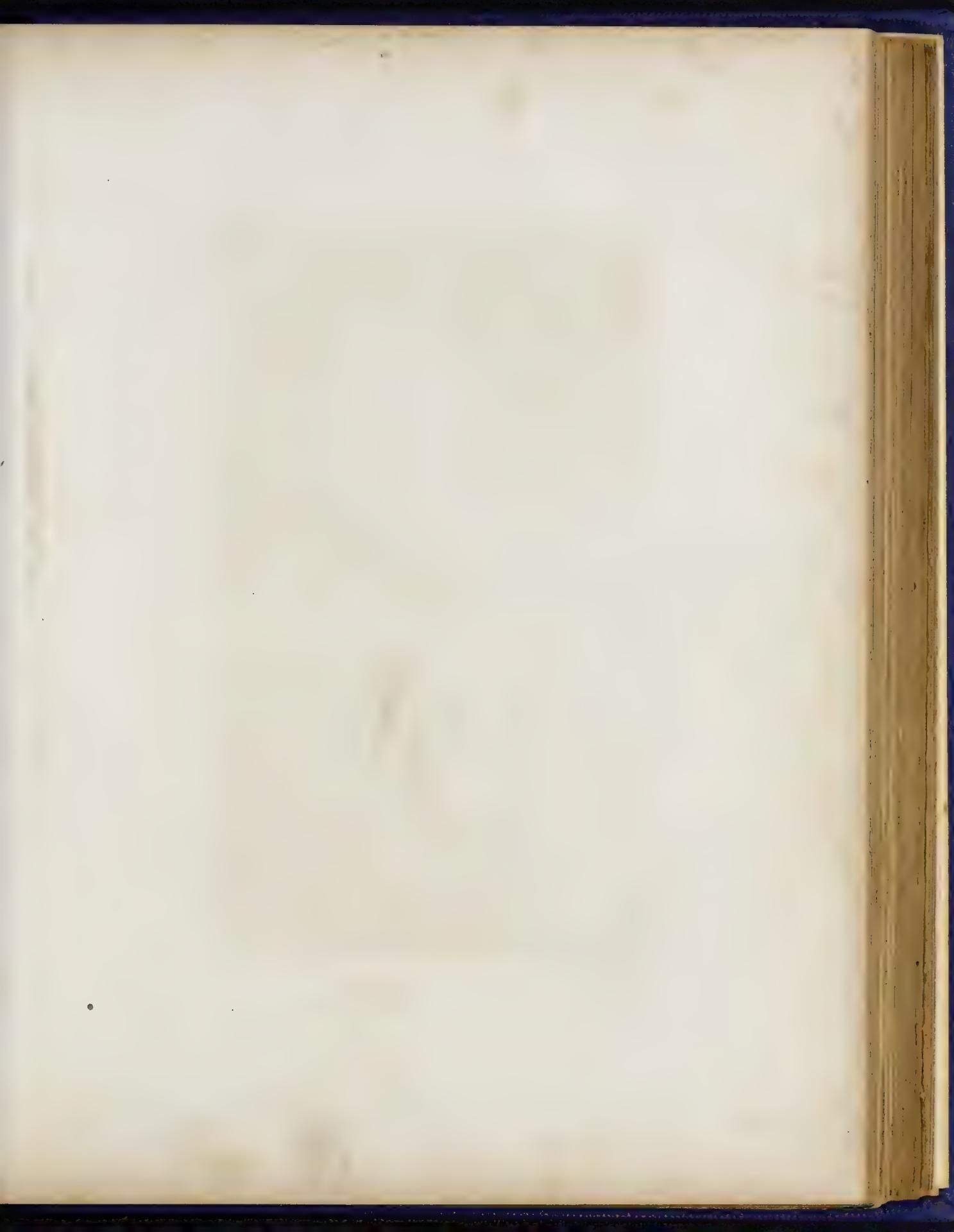
"Has not, I dare say, escaped her vigilant notice," said Washington, as he interrupted the commandant with an account of the good service done him by the mysterious fairy of the forest.

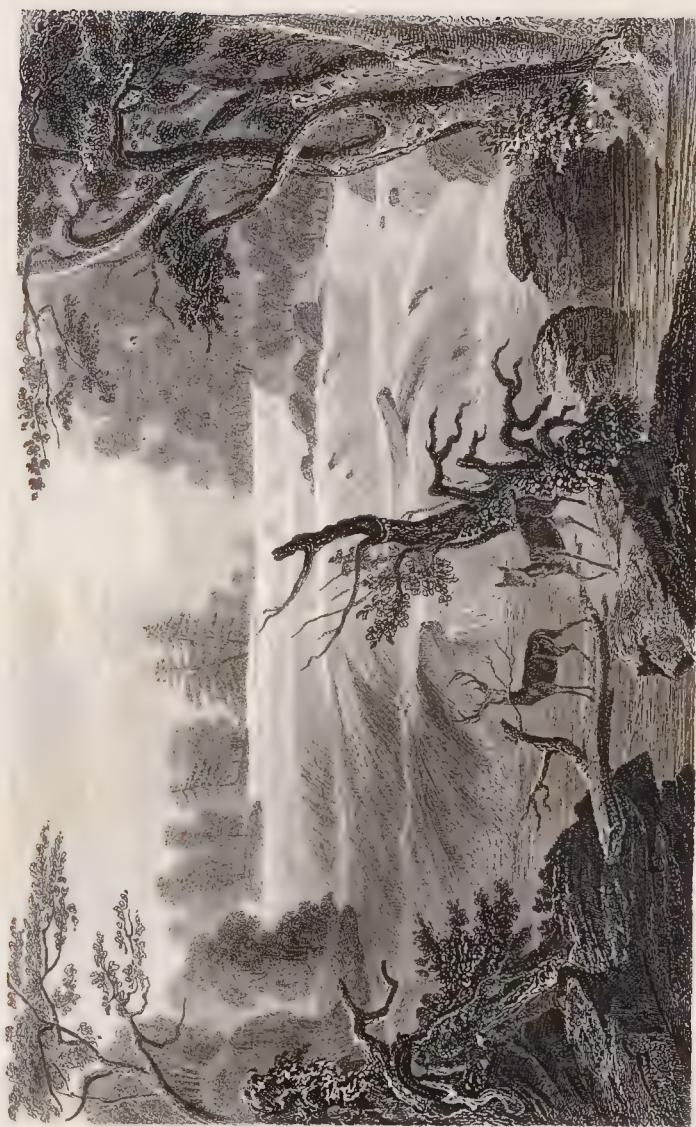
"Ha, ha! my mad Gabrielle, unquestionably! You will find her a lawless creature, gentlemen, but still rich in all the softest traits of woman's nature—buried somewhat, perhaps, but not lost under the rough habits of her wild life. It is singular what an influence the united strength and delicatesse of her character have given her over our jealous and intractable Indian neighbours. She is a greater protection to our settlement here than all my garrison, and I could give you no passport through the savage tribes, for leagues around, half so authoritative as her simple name. But here she comes!"

"As Gabrielle entered, with an ease and grace not surpassed by what our travellers had already learned of her courage, they hastened to express their thanks for her late good offices, which her hasty retreat had prevented their making at the time.

"Indeed, gentlemen," answered the mischievous girl, "you owe me no thanks; but you must be more heedful of your path, or your brave Governor in Williamsburg may lose some ornaments to his ball-room."

"Nay, Mademoiselle," said Fairfax, half amused, half angry,





'we are perhaps not as daring and dauntless foresters as your fair ladyship, but we have been reared, believe me, to better ends than simply to figure in a minuet.'

"'You are happy,' continued the laughing Gabrielle, 'in living in a land and among scenes which develop a stronger and truer manhood than we often find in the worn-out life of our old civilization; though my honoured father does not agree with me on this point.'

"'But do you not, Mademoiselle, sometimes grow weary of your isolated life here, and sigh for the gay pleasures of your native Paris, which your youth and wit and beauty so admirably fit you to enjoy?'

"'Nay, nay, my youth and beauty are much better expended here, where they are ever preserved and renewed by healthful occupation and innocent thought. The hills and valleys and waters repay my wit with much more instructive and agreeable talk than the silly tattle of the drawing-room. The song of the birds is pleasanter to me than the false flatteries of heartless admirers, and the fragrance of the pure mountain air more grateful than the perfume of lovers' sighs. Besides, I have still sufficient companionship in the love of my parents and friends; and books and papers teach me all the best thought of the world, and show me its most brilliant spectacles, while I am relieved from the fatigue of walking in the painful procession.'

"More than once, and in various ways, did Gabrielle, as the days passed on, give expression to this haughty spirit of contempt for the wonted pleasures and passions of her sex; and yet, despite her exalted philosophy, she lingered, with each successive hour, longer and longer in the society of her new friends, seldom, indeed, following her old life in the woods, except when they accompanied her.

"Harry Fairfax seemed to have kept his threat to make

war upon the redoubtable heart of the mountain maid; for while his companion was indefatigably prosecuting the ends of his mission, he was following the deer with her over hill and dale, or strolling by her side along the quiet margin of the great river. Whatever may have been the themes of their discourse at such moments, Gabrielle was as gay and intractable as ever in the hearing and presence of others.

"So precisely was her manner what it had always been, that none could suspect her heart and fancy to be less free than before. Harry himself, indeed, seemed uncertain whether any change had come over the spirit of her dream; and this uncertainty did not, from some cause or other, increase the gaiety of his humour.

"On the contrary, it gave him a most perceptible uneasiness of feeling, which grew every moment as the time for the departure of the expedition drew nigh. The truth is, he had given half his heart to the fair mountaineer at their first interview, and the ingenuous frankness of her manner, which made no secret of her delight in his companionship, had soon stolen the rest.

"But whether she had given him anything more than friendly and sisterly regard in return, was a question he hesitated to ask even himself. There was always so much of mad badinage, mischievous satire, laughing irony, and inexplicable contrariety in her words, that he found it utterly impossible to read the real nature of her feelings. Whenever his own speech became too plain an index of his heart, she seemed innocently unconscious of its drift, or, with wonderful ingenuity, misinterpreted it, or wickedly turned the talk into some opposite and most outrageously irrelevant current. At such, to poor Harry Fairfax, solemn moments, she would, too, often affect a sighing remembrance of the devoted cousin, whose breaking heart she had so rashly left in Paris, launching out with ex-

travagant eulogiums of his graces and gifts, which were always precisely the very graces and gifts which of all others she admired in a man; regretting her cruel conduct towards him, and wishing that opportunity were still left her to repair her errors; half resolved to leave the woods and return to old scenes and loves in France, and then gaily anticipating her afflicted cousin's threatened visit to America, and, worst of all, kindly proposing to read to Harry some of her old admirer's exquisite letters.

"All this was deplorably heart-rending to our tortured traveller, but his last hour approached, and, nerving himself to the momentous trial, he determined to bring affairs to a crisis and solve all his crushing doubts.

"Unhappily, the solution left him not only a wiser, but a sadder man, as the closing words of a long and earnest dialogue, in the moonlight which fell upon the ramparts of the lonely fort, on the eve of their separation, may show.

"This dialogue, which on the part of the lady had at first been most wickedly and vexingly bantering, grew, at length, grave and serious when the final moment of adieu arrived.

"'Have I then so bitterly deceived myself, and must our parting be forever?' said Fairfax, despairingly.

"'That must be as heaven wills. I am not insensible to the high compliment you bestow upon me; I do not despise your love; but, even did I return it, I should still mistrust my own heart. We have been thrown together under such peculiar circumstances—circumstances so admirably suited to bring out all the sentiment and romance of our nature—that it would be rash to trust our present feelings. Did I love you now, I might forget you in other scenes; as you, doubtless, will think no more of the rude mountain girl when you fall again under the influence of brighter eyes.'

"'I can never forget you, Gabrielle; so entirely does the

whole current of my being set towards you, that no power can turn it aside!"

"'Well, well, go now, and if we should meet again—years hence—and you should still remember me, return me this token,' said Gabrielle, taking from her finger a ring rudely sculptured by some untaught genius. It was given to me by a young chief, whose life I saved, and it will be useful to you in your wanderings among the red-men of this region, who all know and obey Gabrielle de St. Pierre.'

"'And this,' said Fairfax, as he kissed the ring and offered her another in return. 'This gift from my mother—wear it, as a token of—'

"'Of your pleasant visit,' added Gabrielle in her old gay manner, as others came at that instant within hearing.

"When our travellers were again in their own home, the altered manner of Harry Fairfax excited no little curiosity among his young companions to learn more minute particulars of the expedition to Le Bœuf than were given in the official reports. More especially were they interested in the mysterious history of the ugly looking ring which he never ceased to wear and to contemplate with most devoted and rapt vision.

"Washington, when appealed to on the subject, laughingly ascribed the change of his friend's humour to ill health—the results of a violent cold caught in the adventurous passage of the mighty floods of the Alleghany; and the ring, he gravely hinted, concerned certain secret results of their diplomacy which the interests of the colony imperiously required should not for the present be divulged. Even the gentle Martha—so touchingly presented to us in Mr. Deeprede's romantic drama of

the ‘Man of Duty’—failed to win from the wily diplomat any more explicit confidence.

“Altogether, there was no surprise whatever felt at the extraordinary interest which Fairfax took in the military expeditions which the late mission set on foot—expeditions to effect by force of arms that expulsion of the encroaching French from the banks of the Ohio which Washington had failed to accomplish by negotiation.

“At length, in one of these sorties—which particular one, and its exact history, our worthy chairman will tell you—our hero held a command, to which he did high honour by his bravery and forbearance through the hot struggles of a changeful day.

“Night was coming on apace, and the fortunes of the fight were against the colonists; yet Harry Fairfax still battled manfully at the head of his gallant troops.

“It might have been the excitement of the hour and the passion of the soldier, or the depth of his patriotism, which nerved his arm and strung his heart; yet the close observer—had there been such an one—would perhaps have suspected some other impulse to move him, on seeing his daring always exalted whenever his eye rested upon a young officer in the opposite ranks, whose sole business, as he kept aloof from the general conflict, seemed, singularly enough, to be, not to conquer, but to protect, his foe; for more than once had he, by the exertion of some secret power, stayed the arm and weapon raised against him. Possibly he was mortified at this gratuitous service on the part of the stranger.

“By and by the growing darkness put a stop to the contest, and hid his mysterious protector from our hero’s sight. As he was about to retire from the bloody field he turned back for an instant at the sound of a thrilling cry for quarter, and angrily stayed the brutal passions of his men who were

about to finish the unhappy captive. His surprise was great when, bending over the prostrate soldier, he recognized the person of his unknown protector. But yet greater was his astonishment, and new and deep his emotions, when a nearer glance showed him the ring of love with which he had parted from Gabrielle de St. Pierre.

"'Alas! my fancy told me so!' he said abstractedly. 'So like herself! Yes, it must be he! that—that—too happy cousin! And he has come at last, and, as I feared, stolen away the love of Gabrielle! What right has he to be generous to me? He's my foe—my mortal, deadly foe—let him die!' continued the wretched lover, as he madly grasped his sword.

"'No, no! He shall live! I will not be such a wretch! He shall live, for her sake;' and he ordered the wounded man to be carefully borne to his tent. No particular care, however, was needed, since scarcely were they arrived at Fairfax's quarters before the youth recovered his scattered senses, and proved to be unhurt, beyond the swoon which had followed a slight contusion received in falling from his horse.

"When fully aware of the position of things around him, the captive seemed no longer interested in our hero. His thoughts took another direction, and other objects.

"'My father—my father! let me seek him!' he cried.

"'Of whom do you speak?' asked Fairfax.

"'Of my poor father, Monsieur de St. Pierre.'

"'Monsieur de St. Pierre!' echoed our hero. 'St. Pierre—your father?'

"'Yes—no, not my father—my—let me go! Ah! heaven grant that his life be safe!'

"'Yes, yes,' muttered Fairfax, 'I comprehend it all now: his father—the father of Gabrielle!'

"Without another word, Harry and his prisoner returned to the now deserted field, and, by the faint light of the newly-

risen moon, sought in silence for the body of the old commandant. Their pious labour was not long unrewarded. They found the object of their search, still living, but too plainly, alas! mortally wounded.

"'O my father!' sobbed the prisoner, as he cast his arms wildly about the neck of the old soldier.

"'Thank God,' gasped the dying man, 'that you are safe. Gabrielle—my child!'

"'Gabrielle!' exclaimed the bewildered Fairfax. 'Are you indeed Gabrielle?' And even in the midst of this solemn scene, he was not too unselfish to look with more pleasure than before upon his mother's ring on the finger of his captive.

"'Who, who is with you, my child? My sight is dim, and I cannot see him; but his voice—it is familiar to me! Who is he?'

"'It is he, father!'

"'He?'

"'Yes, he—Harry—Harry Fairfax, father!'

"'Ha! Fairfax! Does he love my poor daughter?'

"Harry took the hand of Gabrielle, and they knelt together at the old man's feet.

"'Heaven bless you, my children! I have forgiven you, Harry, for wishing to take away my home, but never for robbing me of my daughter's heart and happiness. You took both with you when you left Le Bœuf. It has been but a sad place ever since. She has always loved you, and to-day has risked her life, in the maddest way, and despite my commands, to protect you.'

"'And you, too, father.'

"'Yes, yes! You have always been, in all your wilfulness and folly, a dutiful and loving daughter, and you will be—a good—and truthful—wife!'

"When the old soldier slept quietly in his grave, Fairfax conducted his gentle prisoner to his own home, where he placed her under the affectionate surveillance of the tender Martha, beloved, as Mr. Deepredde has intimated to us, by his dear friend and travelling companion, Washington. In process of time he accompanied her on a visit to her childhood's home, where they passed a happy month under the roof of that mischief-making cousin several times referred to in my narrative, and at this period a joyous father of an interesting family. The gay pleasures of the French capital did not, however, obliterate the loving remembrance of their forest-home in the New World, to which they soon returned, and where they lived in peace and prosperity, as all virtuous heroes and heroines of romance ought to do.

"When the Revolution broke out, years afterwards, Gabrielle, then a grave matron, offered her sons as a willing sacrifice upon the altars of that Freedom she never ceased to love."

"Have you got entirely through, now?" asked Mr. Vermeille, as Flakewhite relighted his cigar.

"Of course I have. Is not my heroine happily married and settled with a whole nursery of babies at her heels! What more can you want?"

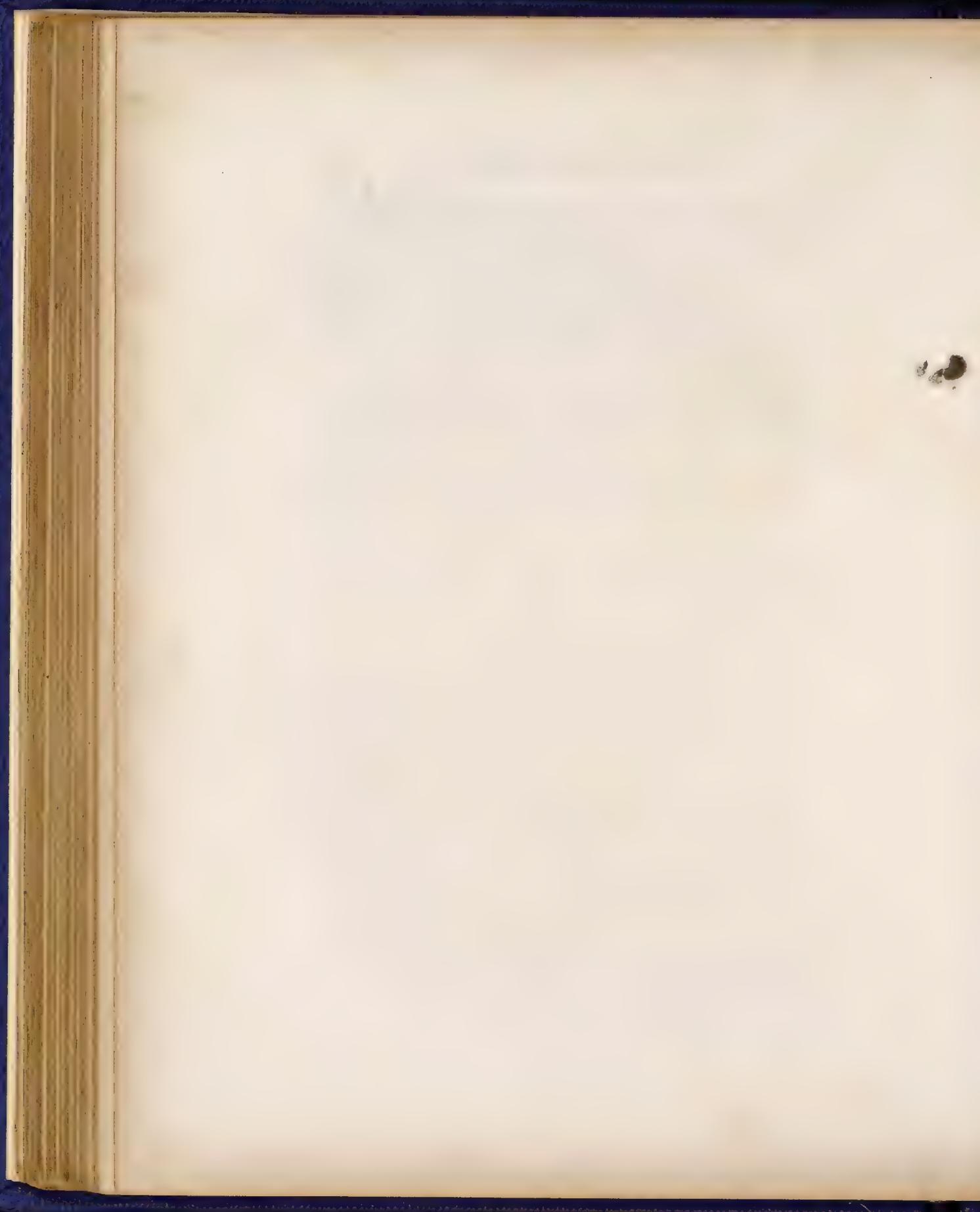
"Nothing, only I have a mind, now that Blueblack has given us a peep at the romance of the colonial life of Virginia, and you a very charming imagining of her wars with the French and Indians—I have a mind, I say, to treat the company to a little glimpse of a later period, by telling them something of the history of Gabrielle de St. Pierre, as one of the 'Mothers of the Revolution.'"

So deeply had our guests grown interested in the character and fortunes of the fair lady of Le Boeuf, that a general accla-

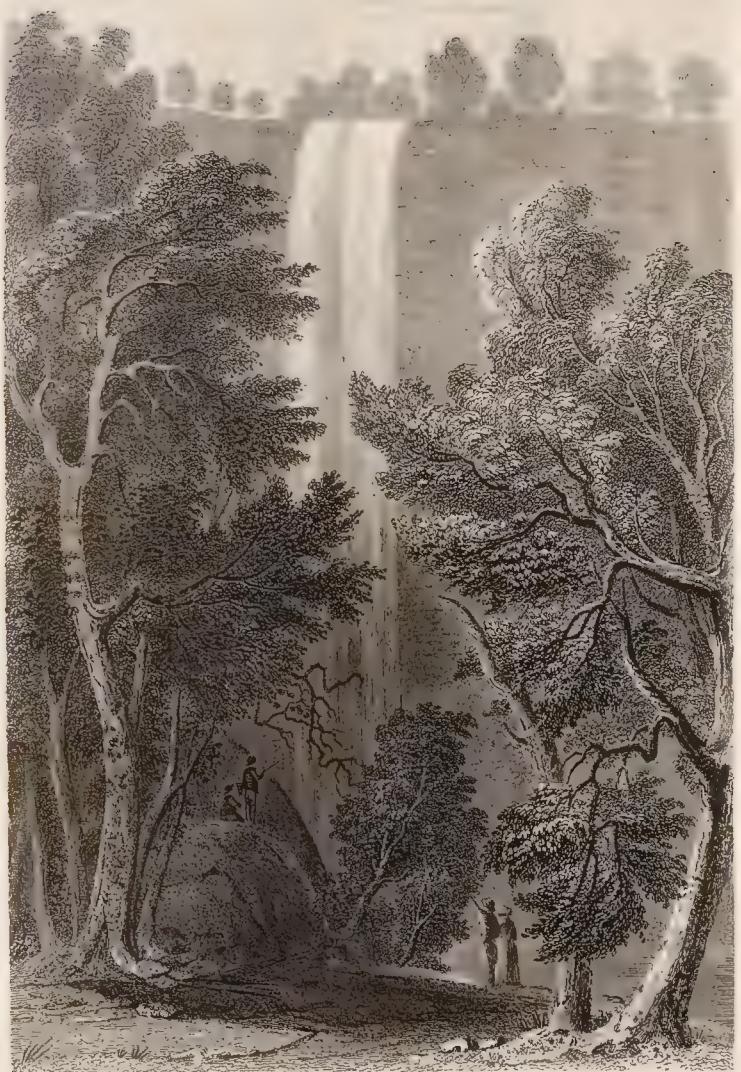
mation of assent followed this proposition; when Mr. Deepredde reminded them that the hour had grown so late, that the story could not be pursued longer at that time.

It can be resumed, we added, at our next meeting. To be sure, our field of study will then be transferred to a point yet further southward; but, as Virginia is a kindred theme, we may tarry there long enough to pay our brief respects to Mademoiselle Gabrielle.

Satisfied with this compromise of the matter, the company dispersed.







CHAPTER V.

"ASPHALTUM, my dear boy, you must excuse my fear that your undue love of the past and the venerable warps your impressions and estimate of the new and the present. Your sight is dimmed by the accumulated fogs of the dark old centuries into which you are everlastingly peering. I cannot but think that you look falsely, when you look despondingly, upon the condition and prospects of American art."

"If I see around me," answered Mr. Asphaltum, "nothing but hopeless chaos after contemplating the glories of past triumphs, it is only as one's sight may be obscured when turning from the dazzling light of the sun; but have we not already said enough on this point, considering that it is not quite germane to the matter in hand?"

"There you are again strangely in error. What can be more relevant to our theme—the history, the poetry, the manners, and the scenery of our country—than the prospects of that art which, of all others, must record, illustrate, and perpetuate them? Still, important as is its relation to the purpose of these reunions, yet, I grant you, it is not the precise subject itself, and I will but remind you before we pass on to the usual

gossip of travel and fancy, that common as it is to hear the most hopeless lamentations upon the lack of popular taste and popular encouragement of Art, very brief reflection will show us that if due, nay, if an extraordinary degree of appreciation of the Beautiful has not been already developed—though perchance unperceived at present in the overwhelming brilliancy of our country's progress in other ways—still we may be sure that the germ lies in the heart and in the head of the people, and will shoot up ere long with a rapidity and strength the very contrast of its past inertness. We have not to look to the olden patronage of the religious sentiment, or to the pomp of arbitrary rule and of plethoric wealth, but we trust to a surer and nobler support promised us in the morale of our people and in the nature of our social and political institutions: a blessed economy which scatters knowledge over the land as the tempests spread the dust, inducing a universal intelligence and taste which will give us a whole nation of sincere and loving patrons, in lieu of the often cold and selfish support of the few crowned heads, the limited aristocracy, the collectors, and the public institutions, which alone nurse the arts in other lands. Our governments, perhaps blameably neglectful of Art, so far as direct support goes, are yet unconsciously doing it the best service in the encouragement of popular education. This is the only soil in which it can thrive and maintain its proper dignity. The improving popular taste will elevate Art, and, in reciprocation, will be by Art refined and exalted. With these two powers, already so strong, and each continually adding to the other, what of distinction and glory in Art achievement and in Art worship, does not the future promise us! We, the artists of America must work as every thing here works—for the people—and, believe me, the intelligence and taste of the people will reward us. Of what avail had been the patronage of Pericles without the Athenians' innate and cultivated perception

of the Beautiful? How widely different the result under different influences: how great the contrast between Athens and Sparta: the latter placed under the same sky as the former, having the same language and religion, the same mythic traditions, but, wanting her intellectual culture, utterly indifferent and neglectful of Art."

As Mr. Deepredde—for it is the worthy chairman, most martyred reader, who has been preaching so long—paused for breath and brandy—and water, we mean—we called the attention of our guests to some of the trophies of our own professional rambles—mementoes of the beautiful Falls of the Tallulah in Georgia.

"Before we start, however," said Mr. Megilp, "as our host desires, on a pilgrimage to the old Pine State, we must, according to agreement at our last meeting, hear the continuation of the history of Gabrielle de St. Pierre, in Mr. Vermeille's promised story of

The Mothers of the Revolution.

"The skies were dark above them," said Mr. Vermeille, at once beginning his narrative; "storms were gathering in every direction, and the gallant hearts of the people of Virginia, like those of their brethren all over the land, were dying within them.

"It was that dark hour which precedes the dawn—the agony going before relief; but the gloom and the pain only were seen and felt, not the hope of light and life.

"In a small shed, the miserable wreck of a once elegant mansion, which had been ruthlessly burned by the cruel minions of King George, sat a woman of distinction evidently,

from her mien and air, despite the marks of sorrow on her face, and of poverty around her. By her side was a young girl whose lovely features suggested the charms which must once have belonged to the elder lady, so many traces of a similar beauty did her countenance yet bear.

"'Ah, Gabrielle!' said the matron, as her young companion looked up, after a long and thoughtful reverie; 'you are, perhaps, all that is now left to me of my many beloved treasures. Do not look so sad, my daughter: misfortunes, it is true, overwhelm us now, but, by and by, God will send the sunshine again. I have been afflicted before, without hope in the world, and yet the bright days have come back. Bless you, my child! I love to see you smile upon me thus. It recalls so vividly all the active scenes of my own wild, thoughtless girlhood, when I hunted the deer among the Indians in the forests of the Ohio: when I first met your father—don't look sorrowful again, Gabrielle, he died in a worthy cause—and learned that there were other and dearer objects and hopes in life, than the indulgence of my own thoughtless pleasures.'

"'You have often promised me, mother, to tell me of those days: do so now. The story will cheer you, and help to beguile these dreadful moments of uncertainty and fear.'

"'Not now, Gabrielle. Let us rather speak of this young Derwent, who seeks your hand and offers you fortune. He is not quite indifferent to you?'

"'Once, mother, he was not. But he has betrayed his country, and I love him no longer! And yet, mother, if this poverty is so painful to you—'

"'God forbid, my child!'

"'Or, if it may serve the happiness of my poor brothers—'

"'No more, my own true Gabrielle! You speak bravely, as I knew you would. Let us be poor and despised, if heaven sends the trial, while our honour and conscience remain unsul-

lied. But hark! is not that the tramp of horses? Surely they will not drive us from this poor shelter; they cannot—take from me—my child!' and, as the ominous sound of the approach of armed men grew louder, mother and daughter clung more closely to each other.

"As they made no answer to the loud knocking which almost immediately followed, some heavy blows were angrily bestowed upon the frail door, which soon shook it from its hinges.

"'Pardon this seeming lack of ceremony, madam,' said the leader of the intruders, 'but I am impatient to have the answer of your fair daughter. She will, I presume, be but too glad to exchange this vile hovel for a lordly mansion; and then like a dutiful child she loves her mother and brothers, I am told!'

"'At least she loves not you, bold, bad man! Begone, sir! how dare you thus insult me? Begone, I say!'

"'Beware, proud lady, that you do not anger me too much!'

"'I do not fear you, sir! I fear only God, in whom I trust for protection!'

"'Then let Him protect you, for by Himself I swear the girl shall be mine!' and, as he spoke, he rudely seized the arm of the defenceless maid.

"Starting to her feet, as if poisoned by his touch, she darted upon him a look of such haughty indignation, such sublime defiance, that even his boundless impudence was for a moment cowed and appalled.

"'Stand back, traitor! I, Gabrielle Fairfax, love a craven like you? I love squalid penury, pain, death—a thousand deaths; but you—you I loathe!'

"'Ha, ha!' laughed the villain in his bitter mortification, and regaining his wonted audacity. 'That is all very fine, fair lady, but it won't do for me. Here, my men! help me to

take care of this poor girl, who does not know when she is well off!"

"Scorning the prayers of the mother, and deriding the anger of the daughter, they were forcibly dragging away their victim, when a stranger, bursting into the room, dealt the cowardly leader a blow which sent him staggering against the wall.

"'Brother, brother!' cried Gabrielle joyfully, as she flew to the arms of her rescuer.

"'God be praised that you are safe, my son!' said the widow. 'But you have escaped one danger only to confront a greater. You come in vain, alas! come only to draw upon us all the remorseless vengeance of yonder daring wretch.'

"'You speak sensibly at last, madam,' said Derwent, recovering from the stunning effects of young Fairfax's unexpected greeting. 'You shall, indeed, pay for this! Leave the girl, now, my lads, and bring along that insolent cub: bring him to the first tree!'

* * * * *

"'There is no hope, my child! no hope but in God! His will be done! I cannot choose between you. Your brother would never permit the sacrifice! You would both die broken-hearted!'

"'No, mother, I shall be happy—happy in saving his life—happy in your happiness!'

"'It cannot be! Think of it no more, Gabrielle! Never again breathe his infamous name!'

"'But my brother?—he must be saved, at any cost!'

"'I will seek General Washington!' cried the widow, as her eyes brightened with new hope—'your father's friend and companion. For the sake of old loves and old scenes, he will save us in our extremity; and, at the instant, she prepared a message, which she soon after found an opportunity of despatching to the neighbouring quarters of the commander-in-chief.

"Scarcely, however, was the note sent, when the sufferers were again frightened by the reappearance of the hated miscreant, Derwent.

"The rebels fly!" said he in haste. "They are losing Yorktown, and with Yorktown they lose all. Your son there is slain, and the other is my prisoner! You would not be childless, woman? Give me the girl, and take back your boy! Quick, quick, your answer! Let her sign this contract!"

"Give me the paper," said Gabrielle in a steady voice; and in a moment she had calmly signed away her freedom and her life.

"Now, then, to the church!" he cried triumphantly, half dragging with him the passive girl as he moved away. "There is no use putting off until to-morrow what may be done to-day, and you may not always be as wise as you are at this moment. Come, come, don't look so much as if you were going to the guillotine: this, remember, is your own free act!"

"As the group approached the neighbouring church they were surprised at the unusual crowd gathered about the old edifice, and still more so at the boisterous and happy humour which prevailed among them. To the hearts of the widow and her daughter the rejoicing brought new fears, while it seemed to exhilarate their oppressor.

"The people are assembled to do honour to our bridal, fair Gabrielle," said he. "Meet them, if you please, with a smiling face!"

"But the feelings of all suddenly changed when, as they drew near, the voice of the multitude resolved itself into glad shouts of 'Long live Washington! long live the Union!'

"What does this insolence mean?" said Derwent, half in anger, half in apprehension. "Surely the rebels dare not thus openly—"

"Rebel and traitor yourself!" cried one voice after another,

as he entered among the crowd. ‘Know you not that the victory is ours?—that Cornwallis is taken, and the country is free?’

“The joy of Gabrielle and her mother now became almost oppressive in its intensity as they were joined by young Fairfax, whom we left in the vengeful power of the recreant Derwent.

“‘You, too, come back to me, my son, safe and free! Truly, heaven answers my prayers!’

“‘Yes, mother, you may well rejoice! We are all free again, and forever! My brother, too, is safe, and will soon be with us. And yet, had that scoundrel there,’ he added, as his eyes rested upon the trembling Derwent, ‘succeeded in his traitorous schemes, our cause would have been lost! But how is it that you have come to share the joy of the people, since you seem not until this moment to have heard the news?’

“Gabrielle, pointing from Derwent to the church, said with a smile of hope, ‘We were going there, brother, to save your life!’

“‘Where we will still go, sweet Gabrielle! I have your pledge, and I shall not release you so easily,’ added Derwent, making new efforts to push his way through the people.

“‘Not so fast!’ interrupted a new comer, who had a few moments before joined the group. ‘I have other bands for you, sir, than the pleasant bands of wedlock! You are my prisoner, Mr. Derwent!’

“At the sound of the familiar voice which here reached her ears, the widow quickly turned and welcomed her eldest son, whom she had mourned as lost in the late struggle.

“Handing his prisoner over to proper surveillance, Captain Fairfax—for the lad had come back with this new honour—returned with his now happy family to the glad walls of the old shed; which they soon exchanged for a more comfortable abode, when their patrimony, of which Derwent’s machinations had deprived them, was restored.”





"All's well that ends well!" said Professor Scumble, approvingly, as Mr. Vermeille finished his little tale and relighted his cigar.

"But it is not ended," added Mr. Deepredde, "for I have yet to continue the history, in a peep at the present period of Virginia life—these weak, piping, planting times of peace and plenty, as you might perhaps express it. I shall make no apology for my sketch, since it will be as characteristic of the region we are to visit to-night, and of all the old South, as of Virginia."

"Good gracious! is madam to come to life again?" inquired the Professor.

"Not a great deal; but if you will all close your eyes, clairvoyantly, I will transport you to a comfortable mansion in the heart of rich fields—once the impenetrable forests of the Old Dominion. There you will see Copley's picture of the beautiful Gabrielle de St. Pierre, chief among the old family portraits of

Margaret House.

"It is Christmas night, and though the winter is kindly, a genial fire sparkles on the generous hearth, bright as the smiles of pleasure in the eyes of the numerous party, young and old, gathered around it.

"Everything within the hospitable mansion reiterates the goodly promise of its old-fashioned comfortable exterior, speaking with equal eloquence of young hope and placid age.

"A fine remnant of the old regime, is the venerable yet jolly gentleman—so contentedly sipping his egg-nog as he talks to a fellow ancient, and watches the mazy movements of the young folk, as they whirl round in the merry dance.

"Very different times, my old friend," he says, "to the trying days of our grandmothers, there on the walls! What would Harry Fairfax and his blooming Gabrielle say, could they now revisit the busy banks of the Ohio, and, stepping into a rail-car, in a few hours dash through the fertile fields where once grew the old forests of the Alleghanies? Would not such a glimpse of the present happiness and glory of their country, richly repay the blood and life they so freely lavished in its defence?"

"Now the reverend seigneurs—turning from the past to the present—have got upon other themes, and are earnestly discussing the crying need of a railway to the Pacific and the influence of the United States upon the current of the dawning war in Europe.

"Fine, manly looking fellows, those, leaning over the antique sideboard, and so heartily discussing the pleasures of the chase, as they review the adventures and successes of the past happy day.

"What would our respected sires say," asks one of the joyous group, "could they step from their dusty frames and join us in such free and unmolested sport as we have had to-day? Gabrielle, yonder, would regain her fabled youth and beauty and fall in love again with the gallant Harry! Here's to the memory of both, boys, not in exports of Champaigne, but in sparkling Catawba from the sunny and peaceful vineyards of their own Ohio!"

"Promising lads, those, grouped yonder in the deep recesses of the old oriel window, and glad on their temporary escape from the college—not from far-off Cambridge or Oxford, but from their own classic halls in Charlottesville.

"No such field now-a-days, boys," says one of the most aspiring of the number, "for gallant deeds, as in the stirring times of our worthy ancestors there! I should like to be a

brave soldier, like old grand-daddy Fairfax, and win the love of a daring girl like Gabrielle !

"' I,' replies a more thoughtful, yet less imaginative youth, 'am going to Congress to maintain and exalt the freedom and fame they so nobly bequeathed to us !'

"What are the matrons talking about so mysteriously, as they sip their tea, and ply their knitting needles ?

"' I am afraid,' says an elderly dame, 'that in the midst of the pleasures and luxuries and indulgences which surround them, our children will forget the virtues and high characters of their fathers and grow degenerate and useless.'

"' Not if we properly teach them the story of Gabrielle and the sufferings with which she so heroically contributed to the purchase of their happy lot, and the duty it imposes upon them to respect and perpetuate her memory and fame.'

"Here, too, are the bright eyes of the maidens bent in pride and pleasure upon the honest faces of their pictured progenitors.

"' Gabrielle in her dangerous forest life and the wild battlefield,' says one, seeking a moment's rest, 'could not dance as gaily and unconcernedly as we do now.'

"' Or forget the troubles and trials with which her life was beset,' adds another, marking the page of the dainty volume she closes, 'in the pleasures of the world of charming books which teach us so pleasantly what *she* learned by harsh experience.'

"' Or love with such confident hope of realizing her dreams as we can,' whispers a youth in the ear of the fair student, as he approaches to learn what on earth the girls are so busily talking about.

"' Every body,' says old Cæsar, turning to a happy group of fellow servants, 'is looking at de portraits of old Massa Fairfax and Miss Gabrielle, and they seems to feel mighty

proud of 'em!" and the virtue and heroism of Cæsar and his ebony mates grow greatly, even in the reflected beauty of the high and pure emotions which fill the souls of the good people of Margaret House, as they gaze upon the voiceful features of their ancestors, and recall the fragrant memory of their noble lives."

"The chairman," said Mr. Vermeille, "has drawn a very graceful moral from the checkered history of Mademoiselle Gabrielle; and now, if the poor lady may be permitted to rest quietly in her grave, perhaps we had better be off for Georgia, and take a peep at our host's pictures of Toccoa and Tallulah. He knows as much as any of us about that region, and I hope he will favour us with a few remarks initiatory of the subject."

In reply to this demand we made a hasty reference to the several characteristics of the scenery of the South; jumping as rapidly as possible, from the elfish beauties of the mystic swamps, the wild intricacies of the dense cane-breaks and the luxuriant rice-fields, onward to the higher lands of the golden maize and the snowy cotton; and, finally, bringing up amidst the picturesque grandeur and beauty of the varied mountain region. Our words were of the briefest—said with no end but to awaken the memories of our guests, whose thoughts we were more desirous of hearing than to record our own.

"My own preference," said Mr. Asphaltum, as we left the subject on the lips of the company, "is for the dreary humour of the sleeping lowlands; not so much for the contrast it offers to the general character of our scenery, as for its own intrinsic charms. There is to me a marvellous attraction in the beauty of the broad savannas, seemingly interminable in the hazy atmosphere which wraps them in such peaceful and poetic repose; and which, with the luxuriant vegetation and the wealth of

forest flowers, soothe the feeling and fancy, but yet keep them delightfully wakeful and active."

"My favourite haunts," said Mr. Blueblack, "are the dark and poisonous lagunes which lead into the mysterious heart of the ghostly swamps. Creeping in my canoe through these dismal passages—their black waters filled with venomous snakes and lurking alligators, and shut out from the light of day by the intervening branches of the cypress, the dark foliage of the magnolia, and the inextricable veils of rampant vine, with the gray trailing moss pendant everywhere in mournful festoons—my fancy has run riot through a thousand wild and dreary imaginings which it would harrow up your soul to hear!"

"Pray don't mention them," said Mr. Brownoker; "such dismal scenes may suit your sombre temper; but for my part, except to follow the deer, and to hunt the wild fowl, which I am told abound in these horrible jungles, I should, when once I had exhausted the novelty of the thing, make my way out, and think pleasanter thoughts, with Asphaltum, under a jasmine bower, or in the quiet shadow of the great live-oaks. Still better, should I prefer the fresher airs and the more healthful beauties of the uplands."

"And better again," interrupted Mr. Deepredde, "the glories of the wild mountain regions; to which, by the way, I think that it is high time we turn our thoughts."

"Despite the many pictures, with both pen and pencil, which our host has from time to time given us of our Southern Landscape,"* said Mr. Vermeille, "its beauties are yet very inadequately known. How few, while traversing the high roads through the monotonous pine woods of North Carolina, think of the grand Apalachian peaks, and the world of kindred

* In this mention of our own humble labours, Mr. Vermeille very kindly employed various flattering adjectives, which we are compelled to omit.

charms which delight all the western part of the State; the soaring crown of Black Mountain, rising higher above the valleys around, than even the famous snow-clad summit of Mount Washington; and the wild passage of the French Broad through forty miles of rugged gorge, to the peaceful and fertile valley of the Tennessee!"

"Then again," said Mr. Flakewhite, "there lie, hard by, the hill-beauties of the Palmetto State: King's Mountain, famed in Revolutionary record; the grand palisaded flanks of Table Mountain; the bold crest of Cæsar's Head; and the many lovely little valleys and waterfalls which surround them—the Saluda, and Jocassee, Slicking, and White Water."

"Bringing us at last, and by easy stages," said Mr. Megilp, "to the third and most attractive division of the mountain scenery of the south-eastern States—the northern part of Georgia. All this northern part, by the way, abounds in noble hill and valley views—from the grand summit of Look-out Mountain, overlooking the magnificent plains of the Tennessee, to the thick cluster of delicious scenes in the north-eastern counties, of which Toccoa and Tallulah are the centre and chief—the one a dainty, laughing, little brooklet, making one merry, bounding leap over a precipice of nearly two hundred feet; and the other a foaming torrent, urging its mad way through a deep and jagged mountain chasm."

"The late Judge Charlton, one of the South's sweetest poets," added Mr. Flakewhite, "said of this gentle cascade of Toccoa, that it reminded him, more than any scene he had ever beheld, of the poetic descriptions of fairy land; and he has recorded this fancy of his in a graceful poem, a passage from which—if our host has a copy of his "*Georgia Illustrated*"—I will not hesitate to read to you.

"It runs thus," continued Mr. Flakewhite, opening the volume, which we pulled down from its dusty nook:—

"'Beautiful brook!—when the moonlight's gleam
 Glistens upon thy falling stream,
 And the varied tints of thy rainbow vie
 With the brightest hues of the evening sky—
 The woodland elf, and the merry fay,
 Chant on thy banks their roundelay;
 And with fairy sword, and tiny spear,
 Fight o'er their bloodless battles here.
 The drowsy bird, from its leafy nook,
 Peers on the whole with an anxious look;
 And the cricket uplifteth its cheerful voice,
 And the bats at the merry sound rejoice;
 And the fairy troop, on their sylvan green,
 Frolic and dance in the moonlight's sheen.'"

"But few scenes in the South," said another speaker, "have been so beloved by the poets as this prattling little brooklet. A few of many lines sung in its praise by a native bard,* come to my memory at this moment.

"'TOCCOA! OR, THE BEAUTIFUL! this name
 To thee was given by the tawny Indian girls,
 When, with the summer's sultry noon, they came
 To bathe their bosoms, where thy water curls
 Around the mossy rocks in countless pearls;
 Or, when in autumn, seeking o'er the hill
 From which thy eddying current lightly whirls,
 Brown nuts, their baskets of light reed to fill,
 They loved to pause, and gaze upon thy beauties still.'"

"As 'capping verses' seems to be the play of the moment," said Mr. Vermeille, "perhaps you will allow me to repeat a sonnet to our brook from another pen.†

"'In the brown shadows of a mountain wood
 There flows a crystal stream scarce known to song,

* Hon. Henry R. Jackson.

† William C. Richards, Esq.

That to its own sweet music glides along,
Charming the else unbroken solitude!
'Tis called Toccoa in the Indian tongue,
And never yet was name more fitly given:
THE BEAUTIFUL! beneath the smiling heaven
No lovelier stream the poet ever sung;
The forest boughs above it interweave,
And through their leafy fret-work sunbeams stray,
And on the dancing ripples tremulous play,
As golden threads the glancing shuttles leave;—
Thus bright and musical the streamlet goes,
And on its marge the scented wild-flower blows.'"

"Toccoa," said Mr. Deepredde, "is a scene as exhaustless in its morale, as it is simple in its physique. It needs few words to describe it intelligibly, while volumes would not suffice to tell all the thought and fancy it creates. Has not some one a story or tradition with which to close our recollections of the spot?"

"There *is* an old legend appertaining thereto," said Mr. Brownoker, "but it's a gloomy, tragical sort of affair. However, if Blueblack will do it up for us in his Rembrandtish style, it may be effective."

"Come, come, Blueblack!" said several voices, as that gentleman shrugged his shoulders in dissent, "there's no appeal here! You must touch up

The Old Legend of Toccoa.

"Well, I'll start you!" said Brownoker, as Mr. Blueblack continued to hem and haw and knit his unwilling brows. "Give us your hand and step along!

"It was a fearful night—I suppose night will be the best hour, won't it?—black darkness overspread the land; the mut-

tering thunders and the vengeful lightning shook the trembling air——”

“But the mad frenzy of the elements,” continued Mr. Blue-black, taking up the grandiloquent sentence, “was a soft repose in comparison with the tempest of angry and revengeful passions which tore the soul of a lonely old crone gazing from the window of her desolate cabin upon the terrible storm without.

“‘Why does not the wrath of heaven strike their savage hearts?’ she cried. ‘O, I live but to avenge the cruel murder of my sons! Not one of my darlings have their bloody hands spared to me! My life, once happy as a summer morn, they have made, alas! more wretched than the bitterest winter’s night! God, send me my revenge; but what am I to do with vengeance, when I am only too weak to protect myself—protect myself! ha! ha! Let me be avenged, and I care not how soon Toccoa sings its death song over the old woman’s lonely grave!’

“Here the passionate soliloquy of our solitary watcher was interrupted by the sudden and stealthy entrance of a large troop of Indians, who had come, evidently, in search of herself.

“‘Yes, yes!’ she cried. ‘This at least is merciful in you! to take the life you have robbed of all its light and hope!’

“‘Peacee!’ said the chief, gravely. ‘We seek not your poor life. If we have slain your people, it is because they have stolen our lands and put out our council fires.’

“‘If you mean me no harm, then why do you seek me?’

“‘To guide us by Toccoa to the valley below. We are strangers here and know not the path, while you listen to the fall of the silvery waters all day long.’

“‘Conduct you over the falls that you may carry to other quiet homes the desolation you have left in mine! I will not lead you!’ answered the woman; but as the arm of the savage rose threateningly above her head, another thought seemed to cross her mind, and she continued, ‘I will go. Spare me, and

promise me your protection and friendship, and I will go with you!"

"I promise, and the red-skin never lies," replied the chief, motioning her to take her place at the head of the file, as he moved towards the door.

"Many a winding bout did the old crone lead the ghostly procession, as it slowly struggled, in single file, against the peltings of the storm.

"A moment's treachery and you die," said the savage, growing somewhat surprised at the length of the way.

"You will soon be at the bottom of the falls!" replied the guide, quietly; and the next instant she stood upon the extremest verge of the precipice.

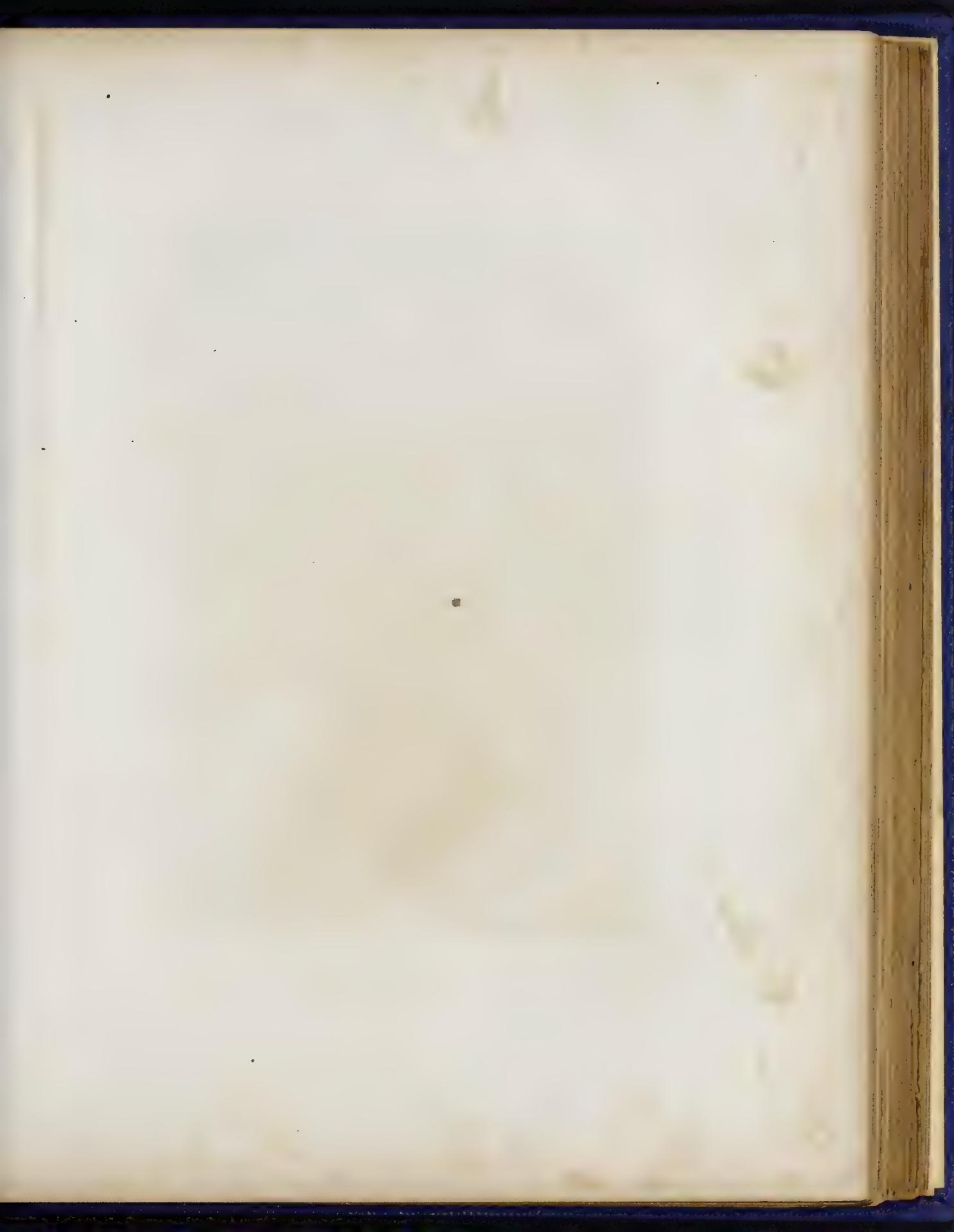
"In the obscurity of the hour and the roar of the tempest, no eye or ear but her own could see or feel the dropping waters.

Stepping aside at this critical moment, cautiously and unseen, her trusting followers moved on, each after the other, down the deep and fatal abyss, from which no wail of despair or death rose above the fury of the storm. One by one, they thus marched to their fearful graves, until not a soul of all the devoted procession lived to tell the gloomy tale.

"As her last foe perished, the wretched woman uttered a shout of hellish triumph. 'Not yet, not yet, will I leave the fiends!' she cried; 'I'll follow them to their living graves!' and with one mad leap she sunk with her victims into the dark basin of Toccoa."

"A gloomy story for so smiling a scene," said Flakewhite; "but, alas! how many gay faces are masks to bitter thoughts."

"A dead march is not exactly the music to go home by," said Mr. Brownoker, as he looked for his hat. "I hope Blue-black will hereafter give us his sentiments at the beginning, rather than at the end of the evening."





CHAPTER VI.

"WHERE are we going?" said the amiable chairman, repeating Mr. Brownoker's inquiry touching the route of the night. Brownoker was always curious on this point, as though it made the least difference in the world to him, happy in all places and circumstances, whither he went. "Where are we going, my dear fellow? Not very far from our last night's camp at Toccoa; only a pleasant walk, if you will, of half a dozen miles thence to the famous cascades of Tallulah, the Terni of Georgia."

"'Charming the eye with dread—a matchless cataract!'" murmured the Professor, turning Childe Harold over in his thoughts.

"Truly, 'a matchless cataract,'" added Mr. Vermeille, "hardly surpassed by any parallel scene in the world. Unlike the beautiful Toccoa, descending sweetly and gently upon us, as the soft whispers of angels, the mad waters of Tallulah—or Terrora the Terrible, as the stream is sometimes called—howl and hiss and boil in endless torture, affrighting the ear like the wails of tortured spirits down in their deep and dark imprisonment."

"Mr. Vermeille," resumed the chairman, smiling at his

friend's desperate metaphors, "means to tell us, simply, that while the waters of Toccoa drop down upon us noiselessly, in a single waving line, leaving no impression upon the mind deeper than a pleasing sense of the beautiful, Tallulah, on the contrary, exhibits all the sterner elements of the grand and the sublime, in the greater volume and rapidity of its floods, in their passage, not trippingly over an embowered wall, but wildly through the rugged bed of a deep ravine. This stupendous chasm in the Blue Ridge is a thousand feet deep; its granite walls rising perpendicularly in many places to the summit of the mountains. It extends in a devious line for nearly a mile, and the waters make, in their transit, a long series of cascades of great variety in form and extent. At one moment the stream flows peacefully as at Lodore,* and, anon, it makes a grand free plunge of fifty or sixty feet, as at the falls known as the Oceana and the Tempesta, and again struggles and writhes amidst the confused boulders gathered at some sharp angle in the gorge. There are altogether no less than nine distinct cascades, each in itself worthy of a pilgrimage to see. They might have been not infelicitously baptized with the names of the Muses, for they present, in their several individualities, all the contrasting characteristics of the mythic group, from the dainty grace of the fair Terpsichore, to the solemn humour of grave Melpomene.

"Seen from above, the picture is ever-changing and always impressive; while in the bed of the ravine, to which numerous paths lead the visitor, a totally different and yet more interesting portfolio is opened. These charming cascades have become of late years a place of favourite resort for the dwellers on the seaboard of the Southern States. They are the central attraction of a wide field of natural beauties; and the whole region abounds with the summer villas of the opulent planters.

* See frontispiece.

Many of these elegant seats embellish the neighbouring village of Clarksville; a convenient place from which to reach all the surrounding points of interest. Toccoa and Tallulah in one direction, and the winsome vale of Nacoochee and the noble Yonah, in another. The Southern poets have always delighted to draw inspiration from these pet shrines of Nature. Who among us can gather some of their stray wreaths?"

"If my memory will be kind," said Mr. Flakewhite, in answer to this demand of the chair, "I will recall, for your edification, some passages from a tributary poem to Tallulah by the Hon. Henry R. Jackson, who served us, you may remember, at our last meeting, in our meditations at Toccoa. The poet is, like ourselves, passing from the gentler to the grander of the sister streams.

"But hark! beneath yon hoary precipice,
The rush of mightier waters, as they pour
In foaming torrents through the dark abyss,
Which echoes back the thunders of their roar;
Approach the frightful gorge, and, gazing o'er,
What mad emotions through the bosom thrill;
Hast ever seen so dread a sight before?
TALLULAH! by that name we hail thee still,
And own that thou art justly called the TERRIBLE!

In vain o'er thee shall glow with wild delight
The painter's eye, and voiceless still shall be
The poet's tongue, who from this giddy height
Shall kindle in thy awful minstrelsy!
Thou art too mighty in thy grandeur—we
Too weak to give fit utterance to the soul!
Thy billows mock us with their tempest glee,
As thundering on while countless ages roll,
Thou scornest man's applause, alike with man's control."

"While talking of the romance of this picturesque neighbourhood," said Mr. Megilp, "I should like to tell you the

tragic legend which gives name to the little valley of Nacoochee; all about a lovely Indian princess, who sacrificed her life to her passion for the son of a rival chieftain, and was buried with her lover beneath a huge mound, conspicuous in the centre of the valley at this day. But leaving you to fashion the tale for yourself, as every body else has done, I will make my homage to the beauty of the valley in the numbers of a remembered song.*

“Enshrined in my heart is the vale of Nacoochee,
And memory often makes pilgrimage, sweet
To the beautiful haunts of the bright Chattahoochee,
Where its silvery fountains in melody meet.

The poets may boast if they will, of Wyoming,
Of peerless Avoca, and lovely Cashmere;
My fancy, contented without any roaming,
Shall find in Nacoochee a valley more dear.

Oh! soft are its airs, and delicious its breezes,
Perfumed by the breath of a thousand wild flowers;
And wafting the music of Nature, which pleases
Far more than the charms of Apollo's rare powers.

The sentinel mountains around this sweet valley
Lift watchful and proudly their towering forms;
And when 'round their crests the fierce tempest clouds rally,
It sleeps in their bosoms unrecking of storms.

Above thee, oh vale of my heart! there's a splendour
Unwonted and peerless in day's glowing beam;
And never are Dian's chaste kisses so tender,
As when she bestows them on thy crystal stream.

Farewell, lovely valley! sweet theme of my numbers,
Thy beauty shall evermore dwell in my heart;
No vision more rare shall be known to my slumbers,
No scene from my memory shall later depart!”

* William C. Richards, Esq.

"The valley of Nacoochee," said Mr. Brownoker, as Megilp ended his lyric, "is useful as well as ornamental; its soil yielding to the tiller rich returns, not only of luscious grains and fruits, but of pure gold. Indeed, as you are all aware, the mountain regions of Georgia, and the Carolinas, have long been successfully searched for the precious ore. In the "North State," as the people here call the upper Carolina, the government years ago established a branch mint, and another in Georgia, not more than two days' stout walk from Nacoochee. Iron is also found in this region, but it is more practically abundant a little further westward."

"Mr. Brownoker's allusion to the material wealth of these too much isolated regions of the South-east, leads me to give expression to a thought which has often come to my mind," said the chairman; "the hope that the influx of new and broader ideas, carried thither by the increasing current of travel, and by enlarged industry and ambition, will soon lift the people above the gross ignorance in which they at present so contentedly rest. In no part of our Union is the mental condition of the peasantry so low as among the inhabitants of the Southern mountain lands; so destitute are they of schools, and so little is their intercourse with the world beyond them. Where the usual means of education happen to be wanting at the North and West, there is still a constant shifting and interchange of population, which induces mental activity and progress."

"I sincerely hope that there will be, through some agency or other, a change for the better before *my* next visit," said Mr. Megilp, "and that the good people will learn the uses of some of the necessities, if not of the comforts and refinements of life. I have travelled weeks together, hereabouts, without finding a book or a newspaper, or any one who could have read them had they been there. Sometimes I have had difficulty in making myself intelligible to their uncultured ears,

and have been set down as belonging to any race but their own. One estimable lady thought I was too 'light complected' for an 'Ingin,' and that I talked 'too broken' to be an 'Irisher' or a 'Jew,' or even a 'Frenchman.' To relieve her mind, I gravely informed her that I was a Turk—a claim supported by the miraculous beard I wore at the time, as well as by a genuine hookah I always carry with me, and was then smoking; to say nothing about a famous Greek cap which adorned my phrenology."

"'Lord alive!' exclaimed the simple matron, in great alarm, and dropping her own corn-cob pipe from her lips. 'You don't mean to say that you are one o' them heathen what I've heerd tell of, that lives on a great wall, and has ever so many women, and chucks their motherless babes under the wheels of Juggerney!'

"'I certainly belong there,' said I, 'but my countrymen are very much slandered. We do the babies now with epsom salts, and keep "Juggerney" for the old women only. As to the wives, it's against the law for any man to have over forty-seven, except the Sultan, and we are not allowed to whip them more than twice a day, unless they happen to be exceedingly obstreperous.'

"'The Lord preserve us!' ejaculated my hostess. 'I wonder they let sich critters go about!'

"'Oh!' said I, 'when we are away from home we always do just like other people. As for myself, I came over on an elephant and six dromedaries to present a gold "Juggerney" to the President of the United States, as a mark of respect from my uncle, the great Cham.'

"This allusion to my august relative, and the high dignity of my mission, awakened the respect of the old lady, and her reverence greatly increased when I informed her that the President had insisted upon my staying with him a month, and had

given me a lock of his hair in a gutta-percha box to carry back to my Imperial uncle.

"When, as supper time was approaching, the worthy widow grew doubtful about the abilities of her *cuisine* to supply the wants of so extraordinary a traveller as myself, I assured her that I had become accustomed to eat any thing, though if she had such an article in the house as a few young and tender cats—

"'Cats! oh gracious!'

"Well, well, it's no matter if you haven't got them; and, then, if you had, you wouldn't know precisely how to cook them; and, unless they are done exactly right they are no nicer than chickens and other things of that sort; so just do the best you can."

"When supper was ready, and the hostess watched my skill in disposing of her provisions, she seemed to think that I had indeed a wonderful knack of adapting myself to circumstances, whatever they were!

"On another occasion," continued the veracious Megilp, "when I was travelling in the character of a preacher—my vocation about that time varied with each passing day—I held up for the night at a house, where a bridal ceremony was in waiting. The victims were young slaves of the family. Great preparations had been made, and both whites and blacks were expecting to have 'a time.'

"Unfortunately, just at the very height of expectation, intelligence was received of the sudden illness of the minister and his consequent inability to attend. Here was a dilemma! To postpone the frolic was a shocking thought to everybody; but to me, the turn in affairs was particularly annoying, when every eye was bent upon me with a look which I could not fail to understand, and if I had failed to do so, it would not have ameliorated my condition in the least, for a general request

was immediately made in so many plain words, that I should assume the office of the absent priest!

"The thing seemed so simple to every body, except myself, that there was no avoiding it, unless I doffed my borrowed plumes; and I have always played whatever part I have assumed, at all risks. Then the bride-elect, too—a pretty girl, though of a rather sunburnt hue—considered my hesitation as so unnecessarily cruel, that I was compelled to yield; and, in due time, the Rev. Mr. Megilp united the happy pair for better and for worse, with the grave injunction that what *he* had joined together no man should put asunder! Of course I declined all fee for my clerical service, even to the hymeneal kiss. Not having passed that way since, I am able to guess only at the results of my evening's work. I trust, however, that they have been satisfactory to all parties."

"Megilp's adventures," said Mr. Brownoker, when the gravity of our guests was restored, "remind me of a merry experience of my own. Like him, I was travelling in the Cherokee region of Georgia, but I was accompanied by a wagish friend more given to fun than myself even. I am a great consumer of the article, but he is a manufacturer. He makes sport every where, and of every thing. Life is to him a perpetual laugh.

"We were driving towards the falls of Tallulah. Our road lay along an elevated tract where water is rarely abundant, and just then a protracted drought had made it yet more scarce; we found it difficult to keep our horses sufficiently soaked, especially as the few and far between settlers were quite disinclined to supply us from their half-empty wells. In our dilemma we thought it advisable to astonish the natives a little, and the most facile means seemed to be to turn Frenchmen, seeing that we could speak the language execrably, and like Megilp when he played the Grand Turk, were bearded like the pard. It

was agreed that my companion should be totally ignorant of the English tongue, while I should be barely able to make myself intelligible.

"When we came within hearing of the next house, my friend Harry rolled off in a towering voice, a Gallic rigmarole, which would have petrified a Canadian; and which speedily brought an old woman and a troop of white-headed clay-eating urchins to the door.

"Pointing to the horse, Harry continued an earnest and vigorous discharge of his strange gibberish at the ears of the bewildered woman, which he did not cease for a moment, not even as I was endeavouring to translate his speech.

"'Mon ami—my frien—madam, vous demande de l'eau for de cheval—de horse.'

"'Sir!' said the poor woman.

"'De l'eau, madam! watere for de horse. You understan' me, mon dieu!'

"'Oh yes!' cried madam, with beaming intelligence. 'I understand you a little, but that other gentleman, I can't make out at all what he says.'

"'Vous voyez, madam,' said I, as we alighted and were preparing to accept her ready proffer of the water we required, 'que nous sommes—zat is, we are ze Frenchmans—we have not been long temps—vat you call long time, in dis vilain pays —dis beautiful countree; and nous ne don't speak English pas.'

"Every thing was so new and strange to us, that we found it impossible first to get the bucket down the well and afterwards to raise it up; so madam, in seeking to instruct us, had to do both herself. Seeing me especially charmed with some bees humming around the pail, and seeking with gay delight to catch them, she warned me that they would sting.

"'Mon dieu!' I exclaimed, starting back in affright, 'you

tink him bite! Sacre bleu! mille tonnerres! petites pommes de terre!"

"At this moment a grim suspicious old mastiff, who evidently was not to be sold so cheaply as his mistress, poked his inquiring nose so close to my companion's person that in his alarm he for an instant forgot his part, and cried in most betrayingly intelligible Saxon, 'Get out!'

"The woman turned with an odd look of surprise, first at Harry and then at me.

"'My frien', madam,' said I, in explanation, 'speak one, two, three, leetle word English! pas de plus! He say "verra well, — verra well indeed, — good mornin," "how you do," "I tank you," "no you don't," "get out!" Zat is all!'

"Our divertissement was so successful, that we determined to continue it as much for amusement as for use. We passed neither house nor traveller without leaving the wonder behind us, how poor devils like ourselves, in a strange land, and so deplorably ignorant of the language, could manage to find our way about!

"Venerable gentlemen whom we met on the road, took infinite trouble to instruct us in the way, which we knew far better than they themselves; even counting the miles from point to point on their fingers!

"When we held up, for the night, at one of the cabins by the wayside, we changed characters, Harry talking with considerable fluency, while I, having just left Paris, could not speak a word. When we were seated at the supper table, Harry inquired if it was customary to make prayers.

"'How?' said our hostess.

"'I mean, do you ask for blessings?'

"'Oh, ah, yes! We ask a blessing—yes sir!'

"Whereupon, Harry, with the gravest air imaginable, and with edifying unction, said—





"O, Saint Patrick, make us able
To eat all things on the table!"

"'You may be surprised, madam,' said he, in reply to the astonished look of the simple landlady, 'but that is the way we do those things in our country!' As supper proceeded, Harry continued to explain the customs of his country, and so novel were they to myself, and so grotesque the stories which he told of my own life and character, that it was with great difficulty I could keep my countenance and save myself from laughing outright.

"At another time we attempted a negotiation for the purchase of some watermelons and peaches, neither of which we had ever seen before. The melon we would not buy unless permitted to taste it, which the man seemed to consider a very unreasonable demand; and the peaches we half devoured in successive and dubious trials of their flavour; we affected to take the things as a present, and made the poor fellow nearly crazy in his efforts to explain to us that they were to be sold and not given away. At last, in despair of comprehending each other, we gave the fruiterer some change and bade him bon jour.

"It happened, that while Harry was thus jabbering to a maiden by a brook-side, he was overheard by a party of ladies and gentlemen who approached at the moment, on their way, like ourselves, to the Falls. As we expected to stay some time at Tallulah, we did not intend to continue our rather difficult rôle while there; but after committing ourselves as we had with our fellow tourists, Harry was bent upon 'going through,' as he said. And 'go through,' and bravely, too, he did, until the second night as he was smoking upon the piazza, within hearing of a love-making pair from the 'low countree,' the lady cautioned her gallant to speak less loudly.

"‘Oh!’ said Lovelace, ‘he’s nothing but a stupid dolt of a Frenchman, and does not understand a word we say;’ and the soft dialogue went on unreservedly.

“The character of this amorous tryst and talk was of so pleasing a kind, and that of the swain so displeasing to Harry, that he could not refrain from confiding it to me, and I to others, until at length my friend was unmasked; at first with every prospect of coffee and pistols, but afterwards to his own and everybody else’s entire satisfaction and extreme amusement.

“Two or three years later I was again travelling this same road, but with a different companion. Recalling the incidents of my former journey, I promised him, should we be able to find the house where we had passed our first night on that occasion, to resume my character of foreigner. But the day was waning, and fearful of the approaching darkness, we were constrained to seek quarters without delay. Coming to what seemed to us as comfortable ones as we might expect, we held a pleasant talk, in good English, of course, with the old man as we bespoke his hospitality. Judge of our surprise and vexation, when we entered the house and found it to be the very one of which we had been in search! As it was then too late to resume my former rôle, I determined to ignore it altogether.

“Down we sat in the same little shed-room, upon the same low chairs, to the same high table; the same old hostess in the same place, and I too, seated as two years before.

“‘I reckon,’ said madam, after eyeing me with long and close scrutiny, ‘that you have travelled this road afore?’

“‘My first visit to these parts, madam!’ said I, coolly; at the same time passing my cup for additional coffee.

“For a while she was silent, but at length renewed her attack.

"'You remind me so much,' said she, 'of a gentleman who was here two years ago!'

"'Ah!' I answered, indifferently.

"'Yes!' said she, after another pause, and resuming the thread of her reverie as if no interval had occurred in the conversation. 'Yes! very much! You are powerful like him, though you don't talk like him. He was a Frenchman, I think he said; and I couldn't make any sense of a word he spoke. All but your talk, you are just as like him as two peas. But that other man, there, ain't a bit like the one who was with him.'

"I affected to pay little attention to what my hostess was saying, but my friend had to choke down his merriment with his handkerchief and a sudden cough.

"At last, as the old lady continued to wonder at my singular resemblance to her former guest, I asked her if he was so and so, this, that, and the other.

"'Just so! exactly! that's him to a dot!' said she in reply to all my questions.

"'Ah!' said I, laughing. 'Now I understand it. I know who you are talking of; wonder I did not think of him before!' And then, addressing my tortured friend, I continued: 'It must be Massareau and his brother! of course!'

"'Massareau—François Massareau and his brother!' said I, speaking conclusively to our hostess. 'They are Frenchmen; live near me; I know them well; have heard them speak of their visit to Tallulah—two years ago did you say?'

"'Yes, two years, exactly.'

"'Exactly!' said I. 'They were here at that time. Do you know I have been often mistaken for François; people have come to me talking a string of stuff, outlandish lingo that I couldn't make head or tail of; and I have had the greatest

trouble to convince them that they had got hold of the wrong passenger.'

"This explanation quite cleared up the mystery and set the old lady's mind at rest for the balance of our stay.

"But my story is not yet told; after the lapse of another two years I was a third time travelling this road, and now, again, with my first companion. I had narrated to him the continuation of our play at the old lady's, and we were careful to pass another night under her roof and to resume the style and character of 'François Massareau and his brother.' I, of course, was to have learned in the lapse of four years to speak the language sufficiently to make myself understood.

"The old woman was more dumbfounded than ever, when I disavowed all knowledge of the last visit I had made her, and claimed identity with the hero of the first only; but my broken speech and the mention of my name of Massareau set her right again, and she entertained us through the evening with a description of my last visit, and of the terrible botheration into which my wonderful likeness to myself had thrown her. On my second visit I had taken occasion to give so good an account of M. François Massareau, that now, he received the heartiest welcome and care. Whether, the next time I go there, I shall be myself, or somebody else, I cannot say!"

"Notwithstanding the narrowed ambition and the primitive manners of these mountaineers in their quiet insulated life," said Mr. Flakewhite, as our waggish historian ended his grave anecdotes, "you may yet find them dreaming day-dreams and nursing gentle thoughts of beauty and love, no less than the dainty dwellers in more cultured lands. In attestation of this remark I could tell you a simple yet romantic history, connected with the very spot we are now visiting."

"You will place us under great obligations," said the chairman.

"By all means let us hear Flakewhite's experience!" said everybody else.

And without further prelude, the brother began his record of the joys and sorrows of

Kitty, the Woodman's Daughter.

"I had spent a long and happy season at the beautiful Falls of Tallulah, scarcely conscious of the lapse of time as I wandered and mused and studied, day after day, amidst the ever varying scene; my mercurial humour leading me, at one hour, merrily along the pebbly marge of the prattling brooklet, coquetting with the gay sunshine as if it never dreamed of a ruder life; and, anon, irresistibly dragging me down, as the fabled water wraiths drew their fated victims, into the gloomy and ghostly shades of the dark weird chasms, where the late careless waters were madly struggling with the giant rocks and the ingulphing precipice; or, when in a more social vein, I would set off with my host and other worthies of the woods in quest of the bounding deer, returning at night to chat over the fortunes of the day and exchange tales of past prowess. To all these agreeable occupations, there was pleasantly added such thoughts as I could draw from the glimpses of the great world beyond, which the constant, though quiet current of summer visitors afforded me.

"By and by the sorrowing winds of autumn came to deepen the wailing chant of the waters, and the spirit of the place grew oppressive in its loneliness and sadness. Even the kindly humour of my host and the society of his strangely interesting family, so entirely failed to relieve the deepening gloom of my reveries, that I determined to seek brighter and more cheer-

ful scenes. It was on the eve of my departure, that I was commiserating my worthy host upon the untowardness of his lot, on being chained forever to so lonely and desolate a home, when he assured me, with a smile, that he found in his secluded dells a thousand grateful objects for thought and study, which those habituated to more brilliant and more busy scenes never suspected to exist.

"'It is not alone,' said he, 'in your great cities that the romance of thought and action is to be found. Even in these thinly peopled woods, the observant eye may read life's histories, its smiles and tears, in the perpetual rehearsal of all the acts and scenes in both the comedy and tragedy of life. If you please, I will tell you a simple tale of love and ambition, which may read as pleasantly as any stories to be gathered in your thronged streets and crowded saloons.'

"'Indeed,' I answered, 'I should of all things like to hear your history.'

"'You must not anticipate too much,' said he, observing my look of eager expectation. 'My heroine is but a simple country lass. One of that untaught class whom you derisively call "crackers." Let me see—what shall I name her? Kitty? Yes, Kitty it shall be, after my good wife. "Kitty, the woodman's daughter."

"Kitty, at that hour of her life of which I am speaking, was just upon the mystic threshold of womanhood. As she was herself well enough aware, she was a provokingly pretty lass, and when her country beaux told her so in their plain frank way, she made the sweetest of scornful mouths, and wondered why they could not tell her something new. In the city she would soon have been quite spoiled—no, not quite, for despite her vanity and coquetry, there was at the bottom of her nature a truth and goodness which nothing could spoil. It was the unconscious perception of these better and deeper

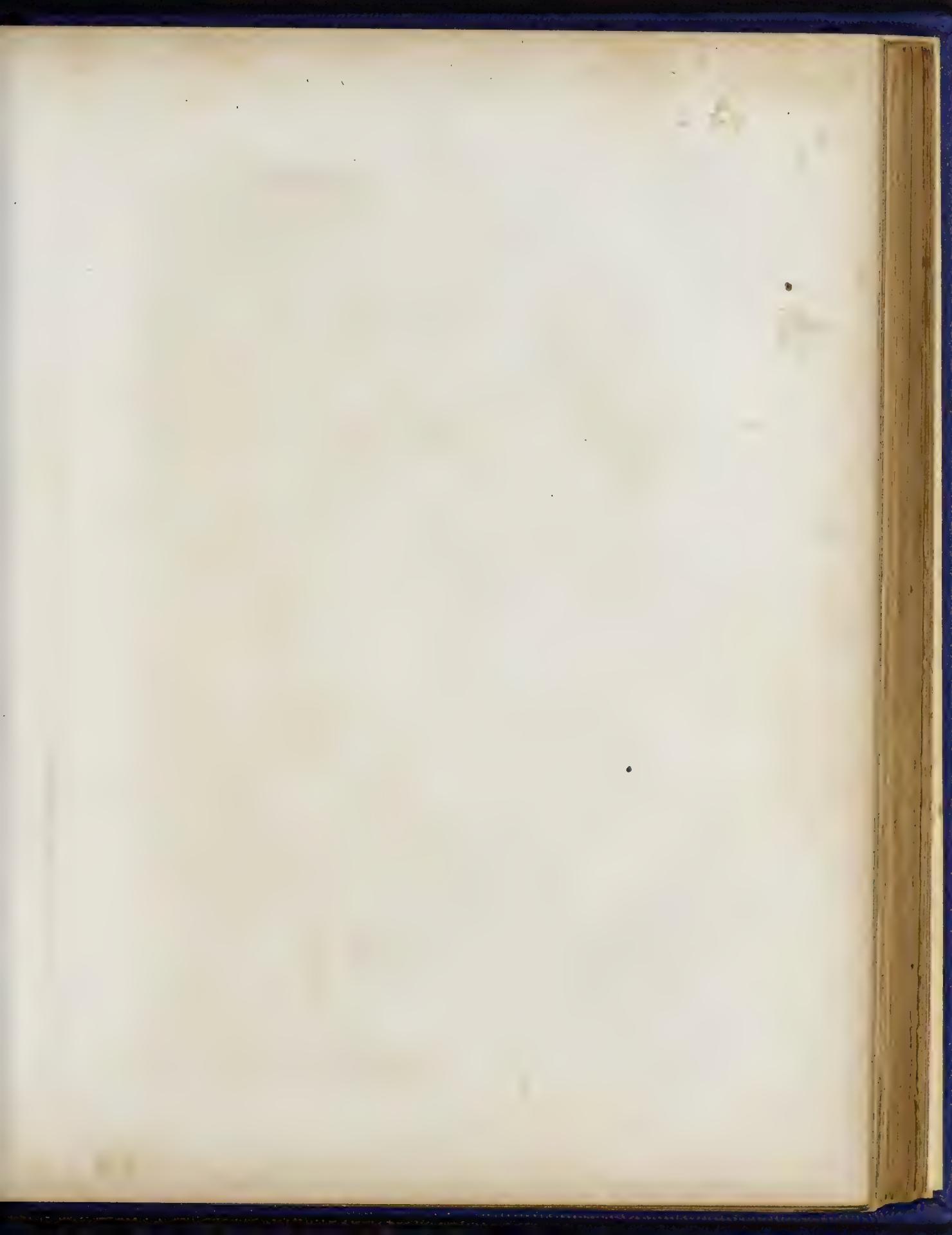
traits of Kitty's character, which made her rude admirers so readily forgive all her pretty imperious disdain. Though afflicted, as she thought, with incorrigibly rosy health, there was a native grace and delicacy in her whole person and manner, and a sentiment of refinement in all her tastes and feelings, which seemed to lift her far above the social grade of her kindred and fellows. Her parents were too proud of these attractions in their "little lady," as they delighted to call her, to notice their dangerous tendency; how they were filling her young dreaming heart with aspirations above the position in which fortune had placed her; aspirations which might some day lure their pretty butterfly far beyond their own narrow reach. This danger they did not perceive, much less the fatal nourishment it drew from the fascinating glimpses of a prouder and more beautiful life, which Kitty saw in the society of the summer visitants to the Falls; who were at once attracted by her beauty and wit, and to whose manners and tastes she assimilated herself as by instinct. Though she did not neglect, yet she would hasten her household toils, that she might talk with the fair girls from the lowlands about the glittering scenes of their own gay life, and they, pleased with her eager curiosity and interest, would open her beaming eyes to a thousand seductive pictures. The elegant compliments, too, of the gentlemen, charmed her beyond measure, though she received their honeyed speeches with a mixture of girlish simplicity and womanly sense, which was an effectual antidote to any poison they bore, beyond a fostering of her thoughtless vanity and vague ambition. How proudly she looked down upon her country mates, as she familiarly walked or rode by the side of the city ladies! and with what a queenly air she saluted her rustic swains when she encountered them, as she coquettted with her more elegant admirers!

"Kitty, at this time, was rapidly cherishing a spirit of

discontent with her humble sphere. She dreamed of gay dresses, and perfumed gloves, and delicate slippers, while she looked at her own simple wardrobe. She thought of soft carpets, as she scornfully trod the fragrant, flowery greensward; and of piano-fortes and opera-airs, as she turned a wearied ear from the carols of the birds in the tree-tops. Even when the winter days came and she was again cast upon the society of her own home, only, the fatal spell still influenced her, through the luring voice of the light books which her summer friends had left behind them; just such books as she could read with the least possible advantage, especially in her then romantic humour.

"She would muse over these fascinating pages by the evening fire-side, to the entire forgetfulness of the gossip around her, and until she grew unable to listen, even with patience, to the homely talk of the few country lads who were still bold enough to approach her. They were few, indeed, and daily diminishing in number, in the frostiness of her fine lady airs; for to men untaught in the gallantries of courtly society, there is no object in the world so awe-inspiring as the presence of a proud and beautiful woman.

"While her timid suitors thus one after the other withdrew, there was one, the humblest of them all, who still lingered in her train. Night after night, poor Davy, as he was called, would come to her father's hearth, and, while talking of the chase or of the crops with the honest woodman, would watch the loved features of his absent-minded or preoccupied Kitty. Now Kitty had a sort of liking for Davy, but it had never entered into her haughty head that he, of all her associates, could by any possibility aspire to any higher sort of interest in her heart; and, for this very reason, no doubt, she often deigned to show the lad much more consideration than she bestowed upon his betters. Indeed, she honoured him with





confidences she would have shrunk from imparting to any of her own sex. She would tell him of her proud dreams and exalted fancies. Once she treated him to a full length picture of the extraordinary gentleman for whom she was saving up her little heart; a picture in which the unhappy Davy could detect no resemblance whatever to himself.

"The winter was the golden season of our hero's life, for then he enjoyed an access to the shrine of his silent worship, from which he was barred in the warm months by the intervention of more favoured supplicants. These brighter days of the year—sadder ones to Davy—were again returning; but, as a last ray of his passing sunshine, Kitty had, to his great delight, invited him to accompany her on a visit to the Falls. Nature was donning her gayest attire, and her hopeful smiles won responsive gladness from the blithe heart of our Kitty, dreamily expectant of coming pleasures. Davy thought that he had never seen her looking so beautiful, and he watched her with loving anxiety as she flew with mad temerity from rock to rock, up and down the frightful ravine.

"'Don't, O don't, Kitty!' he would cry, in painful alarm at her daring. 'Please, don't! If you should fall into the water, what should I do——'

"'What should you do, indeed! Why fish me out to be sure! A pretty beau you are, not to know what to do in such a simple case!' and on she would fly over yet more dangerous paths.

"At length, as if to vindicate the reasonableness of Davy's fears, while rounding a narrow ledge, her foot slipped, and she fell—into the arms, not, alas! of her honest cicerone, but of a new-comer, who, happily for her, was at that timely instant turning the rocky corner from the opposite side.

"The stranger smiled, as he placed her in safety upon her wilful feet, with a playful reproof of her reckless courage;

and Kitty, conquering the blush which mantled her face as she noticed that her protector was a stranger and a 'gentleman,' expressed her thanks in very proper phrase; so gracefully, indeed, as to win him to linger by her side in her further wanderings about the gorge; and, as to lead him, when they regained the spot of their first meeting, and Kitty intimated her intention of returning home, to insist upon accompanying her.

"'Besides,' said he, urging his request, which she had half denied, and pointing to Davy, still rooted to the place from whence he had witnessed her lucky escape, 'our young friend, there, takes such poor care of you, that I can no more trust you to him than to yourself!'

"'Oh! I thank you!' said Kitty. 'It was not Davy's fault! I have but a little way to go, only to the first house on the road, which you must have travelled in coming here.'

"'Ah! so your father lives at the first house, does he? Then you can't prevent my going with you, for that is *my* home, too, for a while. And so,' he continued, looking at the young girl with sincere interest, 'you are that Kitty of whom I have heard my sister Nora—Miss Waller, talk so much!'

"'Nora!—Miss Waller!' cried Kitty, in delighted surprise. 'And, are you her brother—'

"'Charles Waller—like my sister, your old, good friend, if you will let it be so,' said the gentleman, gaily.

"Kitty readily accepted the proffered friendship, both future and retrospective, for the stranger's sister was the best beloved of all her gay summer friends. She had countless questions to ask about her, and when they were answered, there came other things to talk of, so that their long walk seemed not half long enough, to Kitty, at least, when it brought them to her father's door.

"Honest Davy had trudged on behind, all the while, in

a much less happy mood than that in which he had begun the excursion; his jealous heart drawing most discouraging comparisons between his new rival and himself—comparisons which, in justice to Kitty, we must say, it never occurred to herself to make.

"A cordial companionship was soon established between Kitty and her guest. Her merry, pleasant society, often beguiled him from his studies, and she was not unfrequently the sharer of his long forest-walks. He taught her the mystery of the pencil, as his sister had before initiated her into the delights of music. Sometimes, too, he playfully helped her in her household cares, even to the making of the pies, and the milking of the cows.

"Our slighted Davy looked with an evil eye upon this unwelcome intimacy, but he knew not how to check it. If he were cross, Kitty would scold, and Charles would laugh; but so kindly, that he felt himself compelled to gratitude, rather than to resentment. Indeed, despite himself, he soon grew to like Charles, and to become his constant and willing attendant in his rambles, as he sketched or hunted. Perhaps he was not unconscious of the advantage which the association was to him, for he had something of Kitty's own gift of assimilation, a gift which was now manifesting itself in a way which surprised even Kitty herself, since she had never considered Davy a genius, either developed or undeveloped.

"As the weeks rolled by, and, especially, as new guests came to her father's house, Kitty's manner towards Charles underwent a very noticeable change. She did not meet him with the same sisterly frankness, or in the same merry humour. Charles, at such times, thinking he had unwittingly offended her, would seek to atone by greater kindness for his fancied faults. Little suspecting his real, though unintentional crime—the theft of the poor girl's simple heart—his attempted repara-

tion but increased his guilt; for the more he sought to regain the ground he fancied that he had lost in her esteem, the more she loved, and the more she still avoided him.

"On one occasion, to call back her truant gaiety, he showed her some of his pictures which she had not yet seen. Among them was a portrait of his sister, with which Kitty was especially delighted.

"'And now,' said he, with a smile, 'you shall see another picture—that of my sister's best friend;' and, after a moment's hesitation, he displayed another face of such winning sweetness, that Kitty silently wondered if there could be any living woman so beautiful!

"'It is,' said Charles, reading her unspoken thought, 'not half so lovely as the original! I am sure you will love herself much more than you admire her picture!'

"'I,' said Kitty. 'How shall I ever see her?'

"'She is coming soon.'

"'Coming here!'

"'Yes, with my sister. Why don't you congratulate me, Kitty?'

"'Because, because,' answered Kitty, blushing. 'Because I—'

"'Now be a good Kitty, and say that it is because they will take me away with them! Well, Kitty, there can be no pleasure without its pain; and, I assure you, that to leave you and all these beautiful scenes, where I have lived so long, and enjoyed myself so much, is a great drawback to my pleasure now.'

"Kitty made but an awkward reply, either to the raillery, or the regard, in Charles' speech; for a new and absorbing thought grew in her mind, as she still looked at the picture.

"'And is she the lady who writes you so many letters?' she asked at last, with a faint smile.

"Ah! what an inquisitive little Kitty! Has Davy never written *you* any letters?"

"Davy! write me letters!"

"Oh! I remember, he has never been away from you! But O, Kitty, the ink and paper he would have wasted, if he had been!"

"Davy—write—me—letters!" said Kitty, again, in increased astonishment.

"Why, he looks a hundred letters to *you*, every time he brings me one!"

"I hate him!" cried Kitty, with sudden vehemence.

"Hate him! Hate good, honest Davy!" said Charles, gravely. "But that is a pity, for he loves you dearly."

"No, no, never! I hate him!" repeated Kitty, giving vent to the fast flowing tears, as she hastened out of the room.

While rapidly passing through the general sitting-room on her way to her own apartment, she was stopped by some strangers, who had at that moment arrived; and in an instant she was in the arms of her friend Nora, whose efforts to kiss away her unwonted tears, were seconded by the fair original of Charles' treasured portrait.

"And my brother, Kitty, have you taken good care of him? Ah, if you have not, Caro' here, will help me scold you, as she has just helped me kiss you!"

"He, he is—in his room," said Kitty, as she hurried away, on hearing Charles' bounding step following the sound of his sister's voice.

Her abrupt flight was unnoticed, in the glad meeting of Charles and his friends, and neither of them thought of her again, until they met her at the tea-table, when her strange and abstracted mood was a matter of general and curious remark.

"What," said Nora, when she was again alone with Charles

and Caro'—as she called her companion—‘What is the matter with Kitty? So different from what she was last summer?’

“‘And to what she has been until to-day,’ said Charles. ‘Some quarrel, I suppose, with Davy!’

“‘Davy!’ said Nora, ‘that reminds me how greatly he has improved since my last year’s visit! And is he as much devoted to Kitty as ever?’

“‘He loves her to distraction,’ said Charles, ‘and I do not doubt but that she loves him, for he is almost the only one of her swains whom she admits to her intimacy. We must manage to effect a reconciliation between them.’ And then Charles broke out into a long catalogue of the praises of Kitty, extolling her as the sunlight of his life at the Falls.

“Caro’ listened silently and thoughtfully, divining at once a secret, which Charles had failed to read, plainly as it had been shown to him. But, then, Charles’ and Caro’s interest in the matter was widely different.

“In the days which followed, Caro’ devoted herself to Kitty, with assiduous kindness, and soon drew from her, without her knowledge, sufficient confirmation of her fears. Without seeming to do so, she sought, with all her powers, to cure her of her unhappy passion, and to make her sensible of the worth and the love of her ill-appreciated Davy. This she did for Davy’s own sake, as well as for Kitty’s; as she really felt for his generous character all the respect she was so careful to show.

“Kitty’s nature was too gentle to cherish unkind thoughts, and she had, excepting at moments of *egarement*, too much good sense to struggle against impossibilities. She soon loved Caro’ too earnestly, even, to wish to stand in the way of her happiness; and she felt that her own rash dreams were vain enough, when she contrasted the accomplished and beautiful lady with the ignorant country girl.

"And yet, all this was no panacea to her stricken heart, in which all was still dark and hopeless. She had loved without reason, and so she now grieved and despaired. At wilder moments, she even consoled herself, in the same mad way as she sought to believe, that, after all, Charles might love her; that his interest in Caro', and hers in him, was only a terrible dream.

"It was while suffering the feverish excitement of an illusion of this kind, that she one day stealthily followed Caro' and Charles, in their stroll to the Falls. Having lost sight of them when she came to the bed of the ravine, she again sought the fatal rock where Charles had so opportunely arrested her faltering steps. She looked, as she then stood, long and thoughtfully, into the angry waters. A strange smile stole to her lips, and quickly passed, as she caught the sound of familiar voices, close to her, on the other side of the rock. Caro' was speaking. She listened with painful intentness.

"'I tell you, Charles, the poor child loves you!' said the lady, 'and, but for the egotism of your love for me, you would have discovered the truth long ago!'

"'Nonsense, Caro', dear! she could not be so silly, so mad! she has too much good sense—she loves Davy, I tell you, which is a much more rational exploit!'

"Kitty's life—the spark, which alone was left—went out, at these words. Had time been left her for reflection, she would have struggled, and successfully, against the dark feelings which now filled her wretched soul;—but she gave only a despairing glance at the bitter past, and at the desolate future, and, in a moment, the sinister smile returned to her lips; and springing, without a cry, from the precipice, her fair form was buried beneath the white-crested water.

"Amidst the din of the rapids, no sound of this dark deed, which their words had hastened, came to the ears of the lovers;

but there was an eye which, unobserved, had watched the whole fatal scene.

"This vigilant sentinel was none other than our useful friend Davy. He had not failed to notice the recent deplorable change in Kitty's humour, nor to guess the cause. Suffering scarcely less than herself, he had seen her follow in pursuit of Caro' and Charles, and had himself joined the chase, though at a prudent distance. As she approached the Falls, her speeding figure was alternately present and lost to his sight, as his changing position enlarged or contracted his view. Reaching an overlooking bluff, he had, with terror, for a moment seen her standing upon the scene of her former misadventure; and his fright increased to agony when his next glimpse of the rock showed it unoccupied. Terrible as was his interpretation of the mystery of her sudden disappearance, he could find no other explanation. Acting upon his fearful thought, he flew, almost breathless with dismay, toward the fatal spot.

"Finding no trace of the fugitive, hope returned for a moment to his heart, still but faintly; and he continued his search, forebodingly, and minutely exploring every recess of the neighbourhood. At length, he thought he saw something white entangled in the bushes which overhung the opposite edge of the cascade, and boldly plunging into the torrent, he secured the object, and drew towards the shore the lifeless body of his cherished Kitty. The unfortunate girl was cold and motionless, her eyes open and staring. Davy, in his horror, made the woods echo with his shouts, but without avail. At one moment, he thought that he would die with her; but the next, fancying, as he pressed her cold form to his own throbbing heart, and bathed her marble lips with his warm kisses, that she still breathed, he abandoned the idea of dying, and set vigorously to work to recall his charge to life. It was a long time, however, before any certain hope of returning conscious-

ness blessed his efforts. It was too far to carry her home, if her condition had permitted such an attempt; so he made a sweltering fire, and half buried her in the warm ashes; breathing, the while, with the full force of his strong lungs, the breath of life into her pulseless veins. It was a joyous moment for Davy when she at last raised her arms, and they fell upon his neck.

"Where—where am I?" were the first words she asked.

"You are safe—safe, at last, dear Kitty. I saved you!"

"You, Davy—you—saved me!" said the poor girl, faintly, and trying to recall her wandering faculties. "Ah! I—I remember—now!" and she clung more closely to her faithful protector.

The alarm of the good people at the cabin was extreme, when hours passed away without any sign of the return either of Kitty or Davy. Charles remembered to have caught a glimpse, once or twice, of a woman, on his way to the Falls, and though he did not remark her particularly at the time, he now thought that she might possibly have been Kitty. He imparted his doubts to the old woodman, and they all set off, ill at ease, towards the ravine.

The fears, which more than one of the party had felt, yet dared not express, were realized when, passing down the stream, they found Davy's hat, and a part of Kitty's dress, clinging to the bushes; but their joy was without alloy when, directly after, they heard Davy's voice, in reply to their strong cries, and, almost at the same moment, came upon the spot where Kitty was, slowly, yet surely recovering.

"Gently," said the youth, extending his arms as a shield, when Kitty's friends pressed closely about her; "gently—she's only half alive yet."

The feeble girl looked the thanks she was yet unable to speak, and, soon after, they all started homeward. Davy still

bearing his precious charge, she seemed in no need of the assistance which Charles offered; and Kitty, herself, declined the service, as she smilingly pointed him to Caro'.

"A long illness followed Kitty's accident, and weeks passed before she was able to leave her bed; but Charles and his friends delayed their departure until all danger was over, when they returned to their homes, in the lowlands.—"

"And Kitty and Davy," said Mr. Brownoker, as the narrator paused in his story, "what became of them? Was she cured of her romantic passion, and did she marry the devoted lad?"

"Precisely what I asked my host," said Mr. Flakewhite, "when he reached that point of the tale I have told in my own words. 'Hush!' said he to me, as his good wife was then entering the room where we sat, 'hush—not a syllable about the story, which you may end for yourself. *There is Kitty*, and poor Davy sits by your side!'"





CHAPTER VII.

"I MUST beg you, gentlemen, to take a long breath to-night, for our route of travel is bringing us towards wide and adventurous fields. We must suppose ourselves to have made a world of charming observation, and to have gathered thick tomes of topographical lore, in our passage since our last meeting, from the grand waters of the Terrora, through the wild mountain region of northern Georgia, and among the frank and hearty, yet rude people, thinly scattered over the still desolate interior of Alabama and Mississippi; for we are now passing the threshold of the great West."

"And must keep a sharp eye on the alligators, and a bright lookout for snags," added Mr. Brownoker, taking an observation of the picture which the chairman was scrutinizing, as he spoke, "for here we are, in the midst of the swamps and cane-breaks of Louisiana, and yonder roll the waters of the mighty river, stained with the travel of a thousand leagues."

"Flowing now," said Mr. Vermeille, "in our sight, as they flowed three hundred years ago to the worshipping gaze of the forest tribes, when the chivalrous De Soto and his hardy

companions reared above them the towering cross in prophecy of their future greatness."

"Vermeille is right," continued Mr. Flakewhite, looking at the picture of the evening, as, in passing from hand to hand, it reached his own, "to recall the name of the gallant Spaniard, as our eyes fall upon the glorious waters which his daring enterprise first revealed to the world. It is an event of long, long ago, to be sure, but yet in my frequent passages of the Mississippi, it ever comes to my thoughts in all its wild romance, as distinctly and gratefully as if passing at the moment, and I an actor therein. The deeds of De Soto form the poetic period in the history of the great valley of the West; a poetry of fact which the most lawless fancy might seek in vain to exceed. We talk much of the enterprise and progress of the present day; while we are but timid snails compared with the impetuous and indomitable spirits of three centuries back; when Columbus resolutely grasped a world, though opposed by the ridicule and sneers of all Christendom; when Cortes and Pizarro conquered kingdoms and empires, and enriched Europe by their chivalry and prowess; when great armies flocked to the fearless standards of De Leon, De Narvaez, and De Soto, laughing in their enthusiasm at all obstacles and perils. The story of those days and those men, so much does it surpass our own boasted times and achievements, seems to us but as a tale which is told. 'It was,' says Mr. Irving, in his Conquest of Florida, 'poetry put in action; it was the knight-errantry of the old world carried into the depths of the American wilderness; indeed, the personal adventures, the feats of individual prowess, the picturesque descriptions of steel-clad cavaliers, with lance and helm and prancing steed, glittering through the wildernesses of Florida, Georgia, and Alabama, and the prairies of the far West, would seem to us mere fictions of romance, did they not come to us recorded in

matter of fact narratives of contemporaries, and corroborated by minute and daily memoranda of eye-witnesses.' How the tale of California, which our people take so much pride in rehearsing, dwindleth by the side of these magnificent exploits, though their fruits did not mature so soon as our own buds of adventure."

"Your last allusion," said Mr. Blueblack, "throws a heavy shadow over the glowing picture you have displayed to our view; a shadow, however, which only serves to deepen its brilliancy. I always think in sadness of the hapless fate of the brave old Ponce De Leon, finding only an exile's grave where he so confidently and resolutely searched for the fountain of youth. Perhaps he found the fabled waters, though, after all; for is not the new world which he won, such an elixir to the decrepitude of the old nations? Then there is the fearless Diego Miruelo, and Lucas Vasquez de Allyon, and Pamphilo de Narvaez, and Alvar Nunez, and after them the grand De Soto, mad with will and energy, breasting a hundred crushing storms, and conquering a thousand incredible obstacles, in their resolute march through unknown wildernesses, and among treacherous and implacable foes, only to perish miserably and alone, one after the other, in the height and glory of their gorgeous hopes.

"What a contrast the splendid array of De Soto's army, in all its rich apparelling, as it set forth amidst the huzzas of the multitudes, makes with its shattered and war-grimed aspect some time afterwards, in its stealthy traverse of the Mississippi, when 'the numerous and gallant host,' again using the words of Irving, 'had dwindled down to less than three hundred and fifty men; their armour once brilliant, now battered and rusty; their rich silken garments now reduced to rags and tatters; some covered with skins like the native savages; with hopes once so buoyant, now forlorn, and despair depicted in every

countenance. How mournful this picture, and that—the young and ardent De Soto, passing rich in fortune, fame, love, and ambition—the sorrow-stricken and broken-hearted soldier, dying in the sunshine of his manhood, hopeless amidst the very scenes which were to have realized his golden dreams: his poor remains stealthily removed from one unconsecrated sepulchre to another, lest they should be exposed to the ignominious vengeance of his foes; and, at last, buried fathoms deep, in the midnight darkness, beneath the cold floods, once to his eye so bright with joyous promise."

"I am glad, gentlemen," said the chairman, at this point of our gossip, "to hear you recall these interesting scenes, holding as they do so high a place in both the stern reality and the bright romance of our country's story; but we must of necessity be brief, in this, as indeed, in all our reminiscences; and, it is now time that we speak of our subject in its present aspect. Asphaltum must have become intimately acquainted with the Mississippi, in his search for the materials of his admirable panorama; and will be obliging enough, perhaps, to favour us with an introduction."

"Always remembering," said Mr. Brownoker, laughing, "that the merit of a narrative does not, like that of a panorama, lie in its length. 'Three miles long,' may look inviting on his show-bills, but would be fearful at our round table!"

"If I should relate to you, gentlemen," began Mr. Asphaltum, "all the details of my explorations of the Mississippi, in my slow and patient voyage from the Falls of St. Anthony to the levee at New Orleans, you would, long before I finished, wish that our friend De Soto had stayed quietly at home, instead of opening the way for my wanderings; or, that I were peacefully sleeping with him beneath the deep waters. You would grow wearied with the devious windings of the capricious current, and be crazed with the mere fancy of the mosquitoes

and miasmas against which I have had to battle. My journey, which extended, winter and summer, through a whole year, was made in an open boat, now floating lazily down the stream, or merrily gliding among the swift rapids; painfully urged against an opposing current, or gallantly towed by a high pressure steamer.

"In the course of the voyage, of three thousand miles, from north to south—there is no other river in the world which traverses, latitudinally, so vast an area—of course I experienced every change of climate, and all possible variety of vegetation, from the airs and products of the frozen, to those of the torrid zone; and, of course, also, I filled my portfolio with every sort of landscape, from hills, woods, and waterfalls, to deep swamps and boundless prairies; and met with adventure and fare as contrasted as the habits and characters of the rough and ready frontier squatters and hunters of the one part, and the luxurious and lazy sugar-cane growers of the other part.

"The source of the Mississippi is in a network of innumerably oozy streams, looking something like the two hundred miles of alluvium which is watered by its countless mouths. By one or other of these streams we may reach waters which will carry us to the Great Lakes, or, if we please, far off to Hudson's Bay.

"Above the mouth of the Missouri, the turbid river is comparatively clear and limpid, and its course is through an extremely varied and beautiful country, full of picturesque highlands and fertile valleys, skirted by a shore delightfully broken with forest glades and rocky bluffs. Below the Falls of St. Anthony, the navigation is but little obstructed except by shoals and sandbars. The Missouri past, the river deepens and widens; large islands divide the current and spread the waters over a breadth of miles. At Point Coupee it takes

a more commanding and majestic aspect, which it thenceforward preserves and heightens.

"Passing the mouth of the Ohio, in our descent, we see the more southern characteristics of the landscape. The hill shores, excepting in an occasional bluff, disappear, and the wide marshes and the rich alluvial plains present themselves. Here rises the gaunt form of the cypress, lord of the lagunes, and the long festoons of the Spanish moss warn the traveller to show proper respect to the night air.

"East of the river, and near the margin, lie long strips of rich land, timbered with various species of oak, hickory, sweet gum, sassafras, poplar, cotton-wood, willow, maple, sugar-cane, palmetto, and other trees, and shrubbery. The shore is broken with bayous, giving the appearance, when seen from an elevation, of a long, irregular chain of lakelets. These marshes, and the rich tracts which lie behind them, are succeeded by ranges of higher and more diversified ground, where the vegetation of the pine family flourishes.

"The low and marshy character of the country continues, with occasional variations, onward to the Gulf of Mexico; becoming often an inextricable maze of earth and water; a perfect Babel of wild and rank jungle and morass, and a confused interlocking of lagune and bayou.

"These swamps resemble each other so much that strangers sometimes lose themselves in their labyrinthine passages, and waste days in vain search for an exit. Sir Charles Lyell relates an adventure of a German emigrant in the Devil's Swamp, seen from the heights south of Fort Hudson. 'One day, after felling some lofty cypresses, he made a false turn in his canoe, and, by mistake, entered a neighbouring bayou. Every feature was so exactly like the scene where he had been toiling for weeks that he could not question the identity of the spot. He saw all the same bends, both in the larger

and smaller channels; he made out distinctly the same trees —among others, the very individual cypresses which he had cut down. There they stood, erect and entire, without retaining one mark of his axe. He concluded that some evil spirit had, in a single night, undone all the labours of many weeks; and, seized with superstitious terror, he fled from the enchanted wood, never to return.'

"The same author to whom I am indebted for this anecdote, tells us of a visit he made to Lake Solitude, one of the crescent-shaped bayous formed by old deserted bends of the river. There is, he says, in this lake a floating island, well wooded, on which a friend of his once landed from a canoe, when, to his surprise, it began to sink with his weight. In great alarm he climbed a cypress-tree, which also began immediately to go down with him as fast as he ascended. He mounted higher and higher into its boughs, until at length it ceased to subside; and, looking round, he saw, in every direction, for a distance of fifty yards, the whole woods in motion. Sir Charles, wishing to know what foundation there could be for so marvellous a tale, found that, during floods, large floating logs had entered the lake by the channel which at such times connects it with the main river; that these logs had formed a raft which had become covered with soil, supporting shrubs and trees. At first, this green island was blown from one part of the lake to another by the winds, but a cypress springing from the soil had sent down strong roots, many yards in length, so as to cast anchor in the muddy bottom and thus enable the poor island to settle down in peace and quietness.

"In some portions of this low country, especially near Attakapas, there are wide tracts of floating lands, called 'quaking prairies.' Cattle are pastured here, and you might imagine yourself on good terra firma, unless you should happen to

dig down for a couple of feet, when you would find sea-fish quietly disporting in the subterranean waters.

"The two shores along the lower part of the river are of very similar character, excepting that the western is more broken with the debouchure of large streams, and less enlivened by human habitations. Beyond the marshy borders stretch alternate plains of grass and woodland—now a forest, and anon a boundless prairie—until at last the mountains are again seen.

"Immense injury is often done to the plantations on the Mississippi, through the breaks which occur in the embankments. Valuable fields are flooded, and not unfrequently entirely destroyed. The water rushes through such breaches with great force, oftentimes sucking in heavy boats, and carrying them miles away into dense, swampy jungles, from which they do not always succeed in extricating themselves.

"There is not that same danger in the navigation of the Mississippi, as in narrower southern rivers, of coming in collision with the branches of overhanging trees, when floods swell the current and lift the boat high above the usual level. It is a startling sight to see the huge crafts of these waters, while sweeping down the rushing torrent, suddenly, in fogs or darkness, come in crashing contact with a forest of sturdy tree-tops.

"The wrecks of old boats and barges, left high and dry by receding floods, are common and picturesque habitations all along the Mississippi. In my rambles, I have often rejoiced at the shelter and hospitality I have found even in such homely quarters. Such occasions have served me also to improve my acquaintance with that peculiar class of the denizens of the great river, the renowned flatboatmen.

"Passing by the attractions of the gay metropolis of this part of our country, I will set you ashore some few miles below the city, on the memorable battle-ground of 1815."

"With so vast a theme," said Mr. Deepredde, "we could

not have refused you treble the time you have occupied. We often, in jest, speak of our home as a 'great country'; but when we speculate upon the future of this immense valley and its tributary regions, the joke becomes most serious earnest. The Mississippi is, I believe, the largest and longest stream in the world, whose whole course lies within one sovereignty. With its vassals, it drains a country of almost a million and a half of square miles, which, when peopled even less densely than the New England States, will hold a population of a hundred million of souls."

"And a rare population it will be," said Mr. Megilp, "if it preserves the honest, earnest, and dauntless traits of the parent stock. I do not refer to the national weakness for long rifles, quarter races, cards, whiskey, bowie-knives, and revolvers: these fancies are the mere froth of the strong, pure spirit beneath, and in due time will be no more seen. The moral exterior of the great West is at present rugged and tough as its own bisons, but the soul within is large and rich as its great prairies. We laugh at the extravagance of expression in the people of the West; but there is a deep moral significance in their lawless hyperbole. It is, in its roughness, as indicative of strong action, as the dainty and perfumed metaphor of the Orient is expressive of deep feeling and fancy.

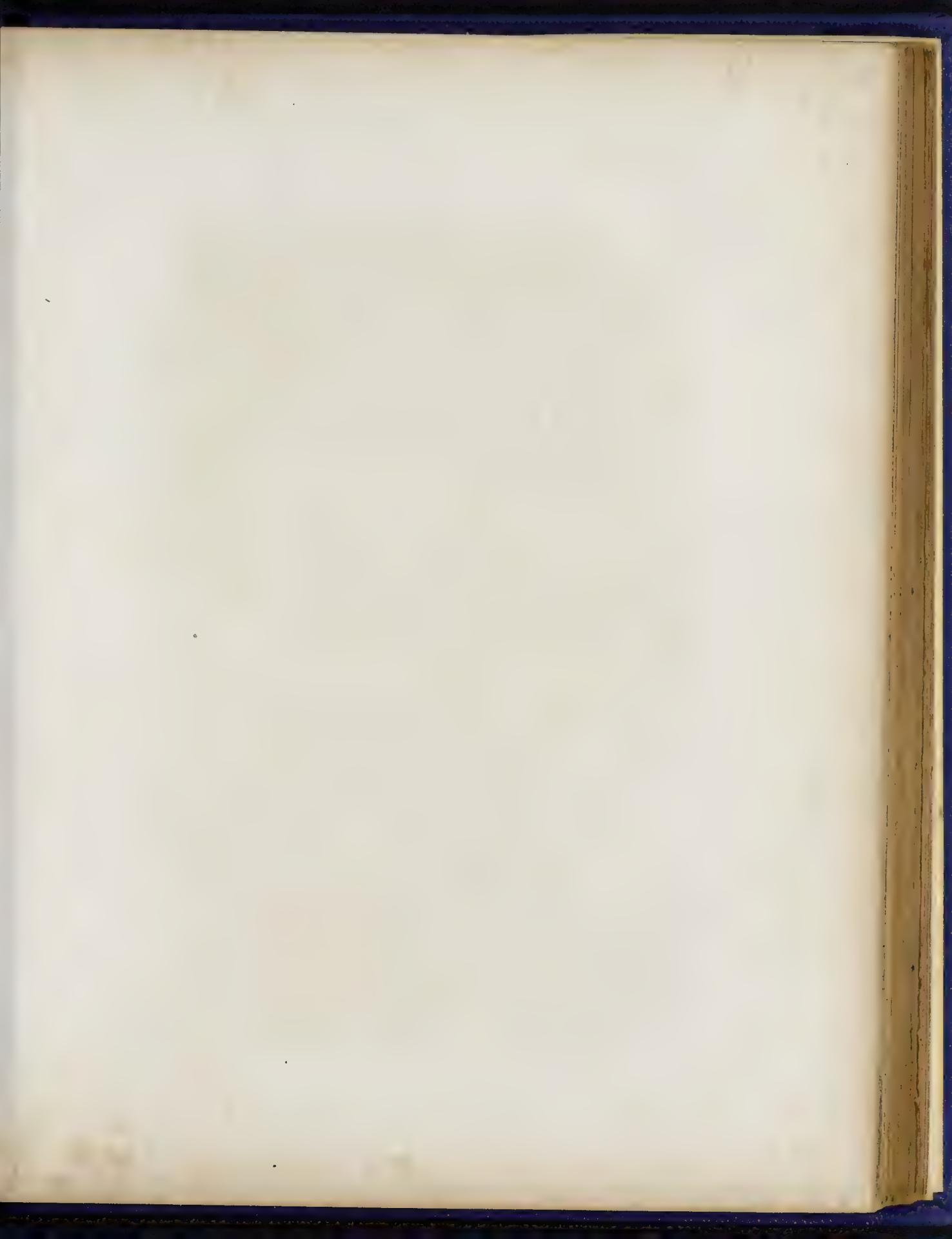
"You may take it for granted that a man who talks to you about his using the forks of the road for a boot-jack, won't submit to be kicked very patiently; and he who whips his weight in wild cats, and dodges chain lightning, will at least try to accomplish what he undertakes. He who has a soul as big as a court-house, may very safely be trusted; and there is genuine piety in the breast of the old hunter, who economizes time by begging every Sunday morning that Heaven will bless 'its earthly table bounties and crittur kumforts, throughout the

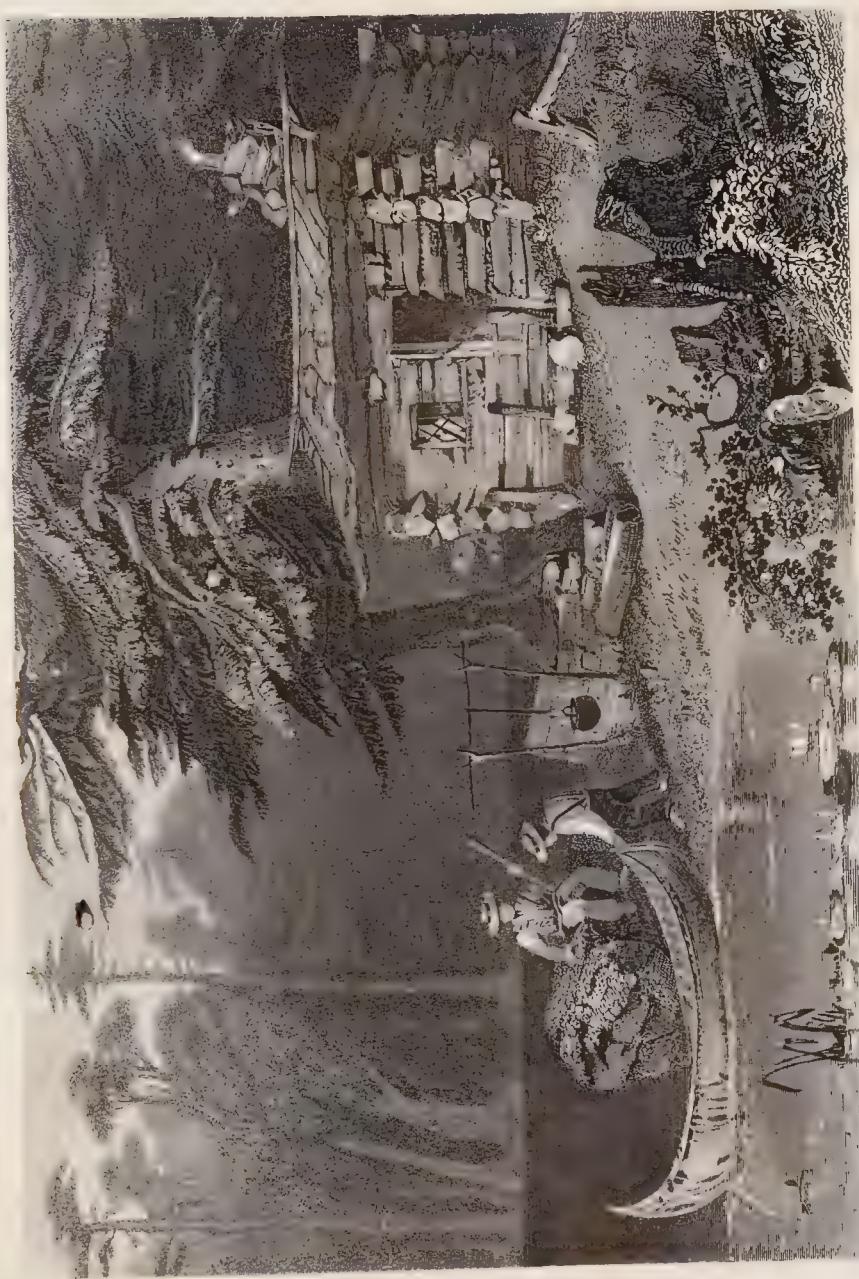
week!' I like the veteran, who, when asked if he was not afraid of the rattlesnakes, numerous in this vicinity, nonchalantly answered, that he generally 'slept over 'em;' and the gallant captain, too, who, when racing with an opposition boat, sits on the safety valve to keep it down with his weight; or, who, when the watch cries out 'man overboard!' asks if he has paid his passage, and being answered in the affirmative, sings 'all right—go ahead!' I do not think that such a man, who, though he can sail his boat on a wet blanket, or in the morning dew, would hesitate to launch out into deep waters!"

"As Megilp is himself a Western man," said Mr. Blueblack, "we must give him elbow-room, even to find a virtue in the follies of his brethren. Perhaps he will commend us next to the universal predilection of his people for betting and gambling."

"In a measure," answered our young Lochinvar, "though the vice belongs more to strangers among us, than to ourselves. If it is an evil, as abstractly considered it of course is, it is at present a necessary evil, necessary by reason of the fermentation stage of our society. In its practical results it is not without its advantage, just now, saving us as it does from yet greater misfortune. Many a dispute is now amicably determined by a bet, which would otherwise end in blows, and we are so undisguised in the expression of our thoughts, that we must dispute; so resolute is our nature, that we must maintain our position; thus, settled it must be, in some way or other."

"Leaving Megilp's logic for further consideration," said Mr. Brownoker, "permit me to add a word here, of fact, not philosophy. I have, in my travels westward, been often amused at the universal love for betting. I have found even children of the tenderest years addicted to the practice. A boy no sooner gets a sixpence, than he must risk it upon some venture





or other. If nothing else offers, he will bet you that he knows the name of the steamboat approaching from below, or, that he can tell which way the wind will blow to-morrow, or perchance, next week; and, it is a common practice for a group to sit quietly around a table, each with a lump of sugar before him, the possession of the stake to be given to him on whose lump a fly may first happen to alight!

"A friend of mine, once showed me a graphic sketch of an old trapper instructing his child in the use of cards. The precious pair were seated on a bank in the vicinity of a church, the hour, evidently, Sunday morning; and the name of his picture was—'A Western Sabbath School!'"

"All these anecdotes," said Mr. Deepredde, "are characteristic only of a portion, and that the humblest, of the Western people. The better classes are as free from such provincialisms, as the most generous education and the most refined associations can make them. More especially, the inhabitants of the South-west; the region to which our thoughts to-night must be chiefly directed."

"Suppose," said Mr. Blueblack, "some gentleman tells us a story in further illustration of our subject: some tale touching upon plantation life and manners. Now I think of it, I have heard Vermeille speak of certain incidents of the sort which I should like much to hear again, and more circumstantially."

Mr. Vermeille, upon this hint, and at the entreaties of the whole company, told the following story of

Mistletoe Hall.

"I can imagine nothing more grateful, to one who appreciates the quiet pleasures of social life in a genial domestic circle, cast, by its isolation from the great world, upon its own willing and sufficient resources, than a leisurely sojourn at the home of one of our Southern planters. Especially when your host happens to be a man of large wealth, large soul, large intelligence, large family, large fields, and large house, as are many of the class—as is he, at least, whom we are about to visit.

"If you can sufficiently withstand the enervating influence of a Southern sun to make the necessary effort, run—no, stroll, we never run, here—to the crown of that sandy knoll, covered with shady pines, and you shall overlook a pleasant bit of Southern landscape. The great savannas sweeping far around you, their rich many-hued carpetings of grain, and grass, and flowers, stirring lightly in the gentle morning breeze, will long win your admiring gaze, before it wanders yet further on, towards the forests of the sugar-cane, skirting the inextricable winding of the great lazy river—the venerable father of waters. What a winsome sentiment of repose and comfort, ease, and content, its broad, lawless course, seemingly without beginning and without end, brings to the heart; and, how pleasantly this feeling is at once heightened and relieved by the bold bluffs here and there on the shore, where some rampant eastern range of hills abruptly stops, as if suddenly conscious of its trespass upon strange and enchanted ground! Yonder, the fringed cypress grows from the moisture of the dark and dank lagunes, and, there, among the orange groves and the massy clumps

of the live-oak, peep the roof and the latticed piazzas of the planter's home, with its innumerable surrounding of smaller buildings—the cabins of the negroes. So many are their houses, that, but for the tropical vegetation and the soft airs, you might almost fancy yourself gazing from the top of Mount Tom, over the village-studded meadows of the valley of the Connecticut.

"If distance, here, lends enchantment to the view, nearness you will find, as you descend from your height and wander through the *riant* plains, increases that enchantment. The myriad charming details of the scene will fill your heart not less agreeably than the broad general view. The solo of the merry bird in yonder myrtle tree, is as sweet as the vague murmur of music through the air; and the snowy-plumed cotton-twig, the gallant cane-stalk, the courtly rice plant, the broad leaf of the tobacco, the waxen boughs of the orange, the myrtle, the magnolia, and the thousand flowers, and vines redolent with seductive perfumes, will each, in turn, of itself satisfy your thirst for the beautiful. It will surprise you to find so much eager life beneath so listless an exterior.

"Entering the broad avenues of live-oak, which so frequently make the approach to Southern houses, and at last resting your tired limbs on the easy lounges of their piazzas and parlours, you will revel still in the same feeling of quiet, yet by no means torpid life.

"The picture upon which we have been looking from the sand-hills—the flowery lawns which we have traversed, the oak shades, the rambling mansion, and its cosy couches—is not a mere idle fancy, but an actual scene, none other than the plantation and homestead of Mistletoe Hall, the residence of Colonel Hayward, our host elect.

"You will feel, at once, how very happy is the poetic name of the venerable seat, as your eye detects the luxuriant

clusters of that impudent squatter, the mistletoe, peeping everywhere from amongst the autumn-thinned leaves of the numerous oaks. One of these trees, you will curiously observe, is distinguished above all its fellows, not only by its massive size and noble form, but by the extraordinary quantity of the famous Christmas bough, to which its generous life gives nourishment; and which, in grateful return, drapes it, when its own leaves pass with the passing season, in a new and richer garniture of green; thus making the old tree an oak for half the year, and a mistletoe for the rest. There is an old custom in the family here, one in which the Colonel delights no less than the youngest of his tribe, of semi-annually rechristening this old fellow—in the spring with one baptismal, and in the autumn with the other; now ‘the oak,’ now ‘the mistletoe.’ This pleasant ceremony is always performed with every proper holiday accompaniment of the mazy dance and other merry-making.

“Now, then—for, despite the early morning and the breeze, you have walked far enough to make rest welcome—we will enter the mansion, especially since that little ebony troop of laughing urchins have already announced our approach, and the worthy Colonel himself has come forth upon the piazza to welcome us. Of course, we will revise our toilettes, and, as the Colonel begs us to do, sit down, without ceremony, at his hospitable table. Ah, what an abundant repast, to be sure, is spread upon the board; and with what rational leisure the good folks are discussing it! The peacock fans of the little black waiters make the temperature as grateful as the broad shadow of the rose-covered porch. We are at home at once, and feel quite as much at liberty to think and act as we please, as if we were in our own house. So, while we eat our eggs and hominy, we will take a quiet survey of our host and our fellow-guests.

"The Colonel—where he gets his title we do not know; such things are as plentiful here as 'something to drink'—the Colonel is in all respects a fine specimen of the Southern gentleman. His gallant person—he is still in the blossom of strong manhood—has been developed by habitual indulgence in out-of-door exercise and all manly sports; and his acute mind has been cultured and catholicized by liberal studies, and by observant travel in all lands and among all people; while his generous heart has been warmed and expanded, not chilled and narrowed, by the possession of wealth and power. His wide and absolute authority he wields, even over the humblest of his slaves, more as a kind father than as a despotic lord. The native fire of his character has been tempered, not extinguished, by sorrowful experiences of life: among these griefs is, no doubt, the loss of his wife—the Colonel is a widower—whom he devotedly loved; while another of these gentle softeners of the heart is his boundless affection for his daughter, the pride of his soul. And well, indeed, may he be proud of her; for a more beautiful creature, even among the queenly maidens of the South, it would be rare to find than Clara Hayward.

"Deprived of a mother's care, even in infancy; petted and indulged by her fond father; the sovereign mistress of a thousand submissive hearts; flattered, as beauty and wealth always are, by every voice they hear; Clara might have grown up a spoiled, heartless, vain, imperious woman, without any blame to herself. Whether these very reasonable results from such a dangerous position followed, in the present instance, we shall see in the development of our story. Certainly, nothing but what is lovely and of good report appears in her gracious greeting to our intrusive selves, as we sit down to breakfast; or in her kindly manner towards any of her numerous guests; or towards the slaves, who seem so happy to anticipate and

perform her will. She treats all, and the characters are various, with graceful and considerate attention and care.

"If she has a feeling of dislike for any one, she seeks, and successfully, to conquer it, as beneath the dignity of her nature.

"Thus, in the impartial share of her regard which she bestows upon Madam Bernard, the bold, handsome French woman by her side, you cannot suspect the little quantum of love and sympathy which she really feels for her. Madam is, or rather has been, her governess. She has taught much which Clara has well and gratefully learned; and much, too, which she has wisely used as a beacon, instead of a guide, to her steps.

"With what becoming grace, and yet with what womanly propriety, she listens to the flattering tattle of that supercilious young patrician, Lieutenant Hutton. She is by no means blind to the real poverty, mental and moral, beneath his smooth coat of virtue and wisdom; and she has wit enough to sound this shallowness of his, were she not too proud or too kind to use it. The Lieutenant is one of those lucky gentlemen 'known, because his fathers were,' and possessing, besides, with the pass-key of fortune, the entrée of 'society.' He has used these advantages now, in a long visit to our host, avowedly attracted by the graces of the fair hostess. His horoscope is not promising.

"Long association, and long relationship, as teacher and pupil, may exact a certain degree of respect and deference from Clara to Madam Bernard: as the social position and not unpleasing manners of the young Lieutenant may naturally give him a claim to her cordial courtesy. But none of these demands upon her consideration are made by the last of our characters, who is neither a Colonel nor a Lieutenant; who has neither family nor fortune to commend him, and who is not

even a privileged dependant, but simply a poor, unknown student, who, through the Colonel, has been prevailed upon to leave his college halls in New England, to earn means by the toil of a tutor to pursue and complete his preparation for the struggle of life. And yet Clara is, if possible, more regardful of the humble student than of others, though not with the galling kindness of the patroness, for he is not one to be patronized. The Colonel, who, though not free from the prejudice and pride of caste, is a wise and just man, sees and acknowledges the worth of his modest guest, and meets him on an equal footing of gentleman with gentleman. Madam Bernard's respect for the tutor is not extreme; and she would not, if she dared, hesitate to say so. As to the Lieutenant, he has not, thus far, deigned to recognize the stranger's existence, who, to tell the truth, has himself wasted no reverence in admiration on the Lieutenant.

"The tutor, himself, is perfectly at his ease; and, though modest enough in his demeanour, has the self-assured bearing of a man certain of his position, and perfectly satisfied of its dignity. To the Colonel's eye, this simple manner is an evidence of a strong, manly character; to Madam Bernard's, of mixed servility and arrogance; to the Lieutenant's, as far as he has observed it, of unbearable impertinence; to Clara's, of a gentleman, with more esteem for his own honourable self than for the adventitious apparrelling of rank and fortune.

"I do not mean to say that Miss Clara is waiting to throw her hand and heart at the tutor's feet, for she is not without both pride and ambition; or, that the Colonel would approve of such Quixotic generosity, for he has his ideas of propriety in such matters, despite his respect for the stranger. Besides, such a thing could not be, since it would kill the Lieutenant outright, with astonishment, if a broken heart should yet leave him alive. Moreover, Clara's hand, not counting the suit of

the Lieutenant, is already engaged. Don't understand me to say that my heroine would give her hand, any where, without her heart. By no means! Her position is simply this: Colonel Hayward has a friend in Virginia, the widow of an old college crony, who has an only son, as the Colonel himself has an only daughter; and it has ever been a favourite project of the heads of the two families, to cement their interests by a union between this son and this daughter; to say nothing of a whispered penchant between the 'heads' themselves, which, it is thought, may come to something, if the first plan shall prove successful. It will be nice if both the schemes prosper, for Mrs. Danville and her son Mark possess large estates, contiguous to the Colonel's domain, and the Colonel could keep a much better eye than he even now does upon these estates, were they 'all in the family.'

"You may ask what Miss Clara and 'young massa Mark' say to this arbitrary disposition. The truth is, the arrangement has been always sedulously kept from their knowledge, but somehow they have both got at the secret, until it is, at this moment, openly and often spoken of, and that, too, as a fixed fact.

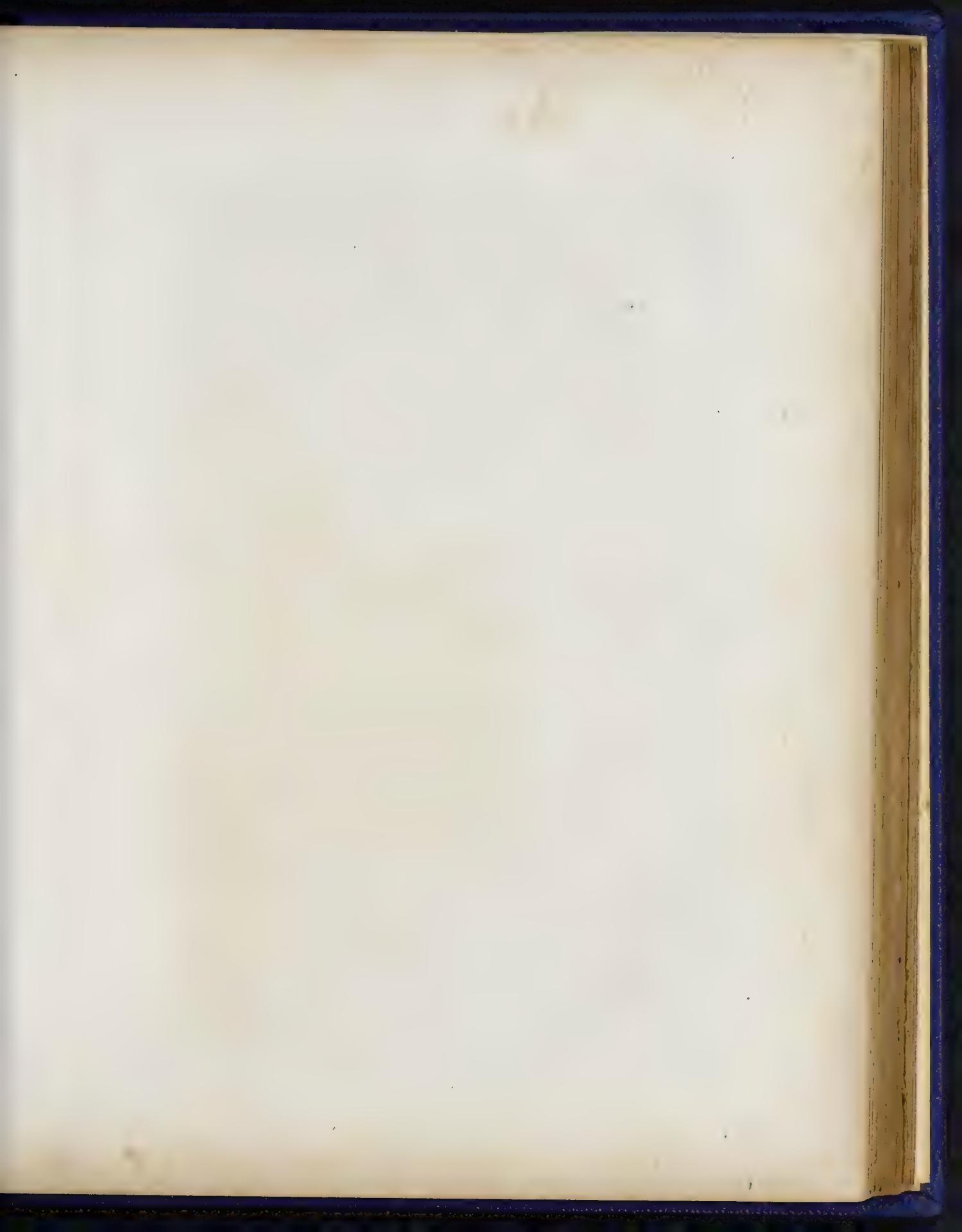
"The young people, to this day, know nothing of each other, excepting by report; and, though they say nothing—Clara at least, and no doubt Master Mark as well—they are inwardly resolved to dislike, in the precise ratio in which they are expected to like, each other."

Here, Mr. Vermeille was interrupted in his narrative by the chairman, who, looking regretfully at his watch, reminded our guests of an engagement, which made it necessary to defer the rest of the tale until another reunion.

More than one desire was expressed to cheat old Time of

a few more minutes, but they were all overruled, and the historian himself said that he should be glad of a reprieve.

In our next chapter then, good reader, we shall see what further happens at Mistletoe Hall.





CHAPTER VIII.

"WHILE unfolding my panorama of the Mississippi at our last reunion," said Mr. Asphaltum, "I oddly enough forgot to speak of that remarkable feature in the scenery of the river, the renowned Tower Rock, or Grand Tower, as it is otherwise called. To neglect all reference to this interesting object, would be unpardonable in any circumstances, and doubly so, when, as I find that it does, it makes the theme of one of our pictures.

"Though I know that you are impatient to hear the sequel of Mr. Vermeille's *nouvellette*, I must beg a few minutes to atone for my sins of omission.

"The Grand Tower is a singular, rocky bluff of about fifty feet elevation. It stands near the village of Cape Girardeau, and is a short distance, say a hundred miles—a step only, you know, on the great river—below the mouth of the Missouri. The hills on both sides of the stream seem to converge in this vicinage; and from the appearance of other huge mural fragments, it is supposed that a cataract once existed here. In form the Great Rock is nearly circular, bearing a few stunted cedars upon its crown. Of course, a change in the point of

observation varies the aspect of the scene greatly; and most visitors will view it very differently from our artist. Perched upon its lofty heights, I have often gazed in delight upon the extraordinary picture before my wondering eyes. The mazy windings of the giant floods, sometimes in their magnificent detours, traversing miles upon miles without perceptible advance, the huge steamers sweeping on in their rapid and noisy flight, the lazy progress of the floating rafts and the uncouth flat-boats; and, reaching far away in the interminable distance, the rank forests and the silent prairies."

After this mention of Tower Rock and sundry other reminiscences which the subject called up, but which we shall not pause to record, our guests prepared themselves to hear the conclusion of the tale of

Mistletoe Hall.

"Many weeks have passed since our introduction to Colonel Hayward's family," said Mr. Vermeille, resuming his narrative, "weeks not barren of incident, claiming our attention. One of these items is the non-appearance of Mr. Mark Danville, much to the surprise of everybody, and to the disappointment, at least, of one. Not Clara, for she, we shall find, has grown every day less and less interested in the doings of the expected visitor; not the Lieutenant, for he can live and be happy without him; not Madam Bernard, for she has nothing either to hope or fear in his coming; not the tutor, since Mr. Danville's absence rather furthers his views than otherwise; but the Colonel—the worthy Colonel, is grievously vexed at the little respect which Mr. Mark shows toward himself and his daughter. He begins to fear that his long-cherished plans will

after all end in nothing. He is greatly disappointed, and sorely chagrined. He begins to dislike the ungracious Mark, and he thinks, too, with a sigh of that proposed tie between himself and Madam Danville, which must fail with the failure of his other hope. Besides these thoughts, there are other, very natural, though less worthy ideas, annoying the Colonel's brain. He is thinking of heavy pecuniary losses which he has had to struggle against for some time past, and particularly, within the last few weeks; the repeated failure of crops for several years, and more lately, sickness and death among his servants, and injury to his estate by rains and freshets; an accumulation of losses which are beginning seriously to embarrass him, and which make him regret the withdrawal of the relief which Clara's marriage with Mark, no less than his own with Mrs. Danville, would have brought him.

"Neither the Lieutenant nor Madam Bernard have much sympathy for the Colonel's sorrows, despite their show of interest. Indeed, we cannot expect that Hutton, being himself an aspirant for Clara's hand, should be over and above eager to meet so formidable a rival as Mr. Mark.

"The tutor has gradually grown to be a man of weight and influence in the daily, social drama, having won for himself much consideration, of a differing sort, from all the members of the household.

"The regard with which Clara treats him seems to be that which he the most highly prizes. However that may be, it is, clearly enough, more than reciprocated. In his hours of leisure he is ever by her side, as they sit together in the shade of the perfumed vines, sipping the sparkling current of some 'antique rhyme'; or, as they stroll in light or 'idyl-thoughted' converse through the oak and orange groves, in the merry morning or the dreamy eventide. Even when occupied with his pupils, Clara is still often near him, finding charms in

Virgil which Madam Bernard never showed her in the pages of Tasso or Racine. Indeed, she seemed to be herself his chief, certainly his favourite, pupil. ‘How pleasant,’ his thought appears to say at such moments, ‘the office of the tutor; when the student comes with intelligence and sympathy to the task;’ ‘and how delightful,’ says she, ‘the labour of the pupil, when the teacher bears her up on the soaring wings of his own enthusiasm.’ It is not strange that our scholar should thus yield to the fascinations which he finds in the strong and beautiful character of his fair hostess, or that she should be attracted by a nature so much deeper and richer than she has been accustomed to meet, and so sympathetic with her own. Their intercourse, in its simple unreserve, seems to be more that of brother and sister than of lovers. There can be no confessed passion in their young hearts, or dark thoughts of the future would sometimes overcloud the unbroken sunshine of the present hour. Their heedless steps would now and then halt, in doubt or fear, on the now unseen brink of that deep social gulf which lies between them, and which neither could overleap without a sacrifice of much pride and prejudice.

“The Colonel sees that his child is happy in the society of his young friend, and he is content, never dreaming that their mutual interest may pass the convenient bounds of friendship; or, if he has at moments such thoughts, burying them far out of his sight in the shadow of that inexorable gulf into which we have but just now looked. The Lieutenant, too, is not unobservant of the path in which the careless pair are strolling, and he is not so blind as the Colonel in regard to its course: but he sees, yet more distinctly than he, the obstructing precipice; and he, too, is, in a measure, content—more than content, indeed—for, little understanding Clara’s high nature, he inwardly derides the idea of a rival in the poor

tutor, while he thinks to turn his presumption and Clara's indulgence to the furtherance of his own hopes, widening by their help the misunderstanding which already seems to have been formed between her and the only obstacle he sees in his way—Mr. Mark Danville.

"Still, the undisguised preference which Clara shows for the tutor's society over his own, is a bitter mortification to the pride of the Lieutenant—a mortification which, every passing day, is in many little ways so sorely deepening, that there is growing up in his soul a feeling of revengeful hatred which, much as it is his cue to do, he can scarcely all conceal.

"This dislike is only increased by the lamentable issue of the few manifestations of it, which, despite himself, he is constrained to make. Every hour and every incident teaches him greater hate and higher respect for the student—teaches him more and more how much he has under-estimated the strength, and how much he may have to fear in the rivalry, of his despised foe. He finds himself surpassed by the modest tutor, not alone in accomplishments which he affects to despise, but in all those gentlemanly graces in which he deems himself without a peer. He might forgive the student for writing songs, but it is a mortal offence to sing them as he does. He would permit him to walk, but not to ride by Clara's side, with so much careless ease: to admire the beauty of the flying deer is pardonable, but to arrest that flight with an aim more certain than his own is insufferable! What business has the man of lexicons and grammars with these arts of the idle gentleman?

"Clara does not fail to perceive the vexation of her guest at the ever new exhibition of gifts, which surprise her scarcely less than him; for she, too, is still advancing in her knowledge of the tutor's varied accomplishments, though with more satisfaction than the Lieutenant. It amuses her to watch the

struggle between these opposing powers: to witness the impertinent sneers of the one withered by the cool sarcasm of the other.

"She shares the student's playful malice, as, when Hutton rudely intrudes upon their tête-à-têtes, he leads the conversation into fields far beyond his pursuit or sight.

"Such a scene is now passing, and the tutor is brought back from his metaphysical flight by the entrance of one of his pupils in search of light upon some dark problem in his algebra. As the lad withdraws, the Lieutenant sneeringly inquires if the tutor uses the birch in his school discipline.

"'Most assuredly, sir, when it happens to be needed.'

"'On the little boys, I suppose,' continues the Lieutenant.

"'Or the great boobies!' answers the tutor, with a quiet but significant smile.

"'You see,' says Clara, laughing, 'what a sad martinet our friend is, Mr. Hutton! How fortunate you ought to esteem yourself in not being one of his unhappy scholars!'

"Now the Colonel's family are assisting in the gaieties of a ball at the residence of a neighbouring planter. 'Here,' thinks the Lieutenant, as he approaches Clara to solicit her hand for a waltz, 'here, at least, I am secure from the impudence of that infernal pedagogue! His legs are too much cramped beneath his desk to figure in the dance!' But, alas! alas for the gallant soldier's vain dreams, the inexorable tutor has already cast his arm around the fair girl, and is whirling her through the hall, to the admiration and marvel of everybody but the Lieutenant himself. He turns on his heel in disgust and through the rest of the evening 'doesn't dawnce!'

"It is one of the brightest of bright sunny mornings, and the party, Madam Bernard and the Lieutenant, Clara and the tutor, are starting for a ride. Hutton has distributed the horses among the cavaliers, and the tutor is about to mount, when

Clara protests against his venturing upon the back of the most unmanageable creature in her father's stables.

"How could you think of giving any one such an animal, Mr. Hutton?" she asks, half angrily.

"Oh!" says the Lieutenant, with a sneering laugh, "I supposed that Mr. Lawson was bold and skilful enough to tame a bison if it so pleased him. But, of course I will find a gentler nag for him, if he is afraid!"

"Not at all," cries the student, as he springs gracefully into the saddle. "You have hit my fancy exactly, Mr. Hutton; I've noticed this fiery fellow often, and thought that I should like to try his mettle. I——"

"But yonder fly horse and rider, helter-skelter over bush and break, while the ladies look after them pale with fear. Which of the unyielding spirits shall conquer? For a while the question is a painfully exciting one; but, at last, it is answered, and Clara laughs at once in derision of the Lieutenant and in welcome of the tutor, as he returns with his foaming but conquered steed.

"Not quite subdued though, for as he draws near he makes a sudden plunge, frightening the Lieutenant's horse and dashing the rider from his carelessly held seat.

"This, however, is his last caper; and Mr. Lawson, as he leaps to the ground, with proffers of aid to the unhorsed gentleman, makes a world of apologies for his unpardonable awkwardness, which he assures him cannot possibly happen again, as he has now got the perverse animal entirely under his control!

"The party, remounted, now move on, while the tutor is patting his trembling horse, and still condemning his own want of skill, which led to the late little misadventure; while the Lieutenant is trying to swallow his double mortification as best he can; and while Madam Bernard, scarcely less than

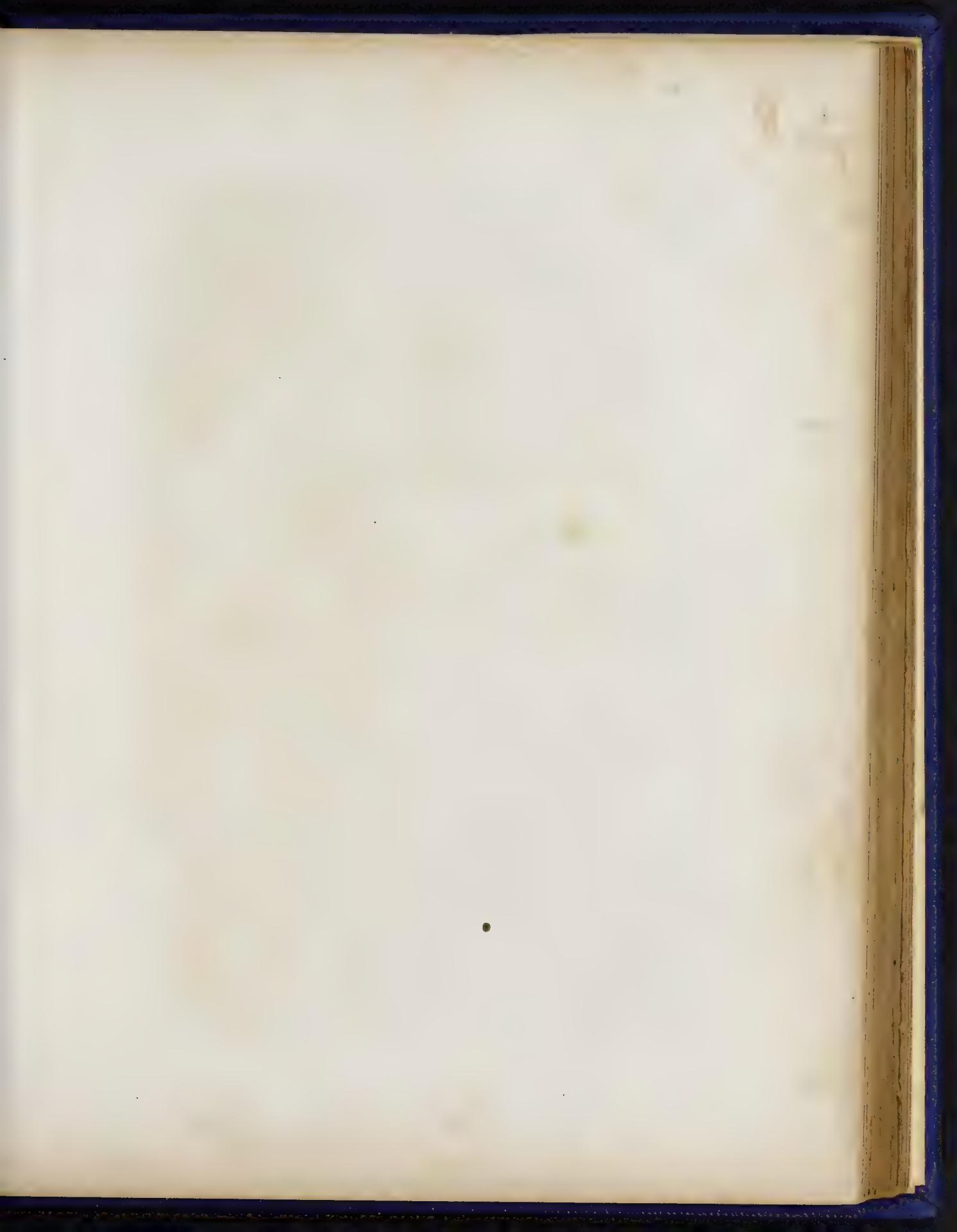
Clara, is vainly striving to hide a laughing face with a decorous veil of gravity.

"But let us see how our young hero gets along with the Colonel; see if his character and his versatile accomplishments have made him a personage of as much importance and influence with the host, as with the daughter and the guests. So it certainly seems to be, judging from the long and animated dialogues they so frequently hold together—from the earnest conversation now going on between them, as they stroll yonder over the narrow dikes of the rice-fields.

"The Colonel admires the gifts of the scholar and the graces of the gentleman, and these attractions have not failed to draw him toward our hero, but certain other merits, which neither Clara nor the Lieutenant have observed, have yet more won his confidence. The Colonel has found in his tutor an unlooked-for, and most welcome sympathy, in his views and habits of life, and a strange knowledge and interest, practical, no less than theoretical, in all his business occupations. He has found him thoughtful and just in his views of the social and political condition and prospects of his cherished home; and as judiciously learned in the whole subject of his agricultural operations, as though he had spent his life in such studies. Thus it is not surprising that the Colonel has given the tutor his esteem and confidence, even so far as to seek his sympathy and counsel in the difficulties in which, as we have hinted, his pecuniary embarrassments were involving him. It is such confidences that have elicited the dialogue in which they are at this moment engaged. Let us see what it is all about.

"'And so,' says the student, thoughtfully, 'you have had recourse to the assistance of Mr. Hutton, which he has urged upon your acceptance?'

"'With all the generous warmth of a true friend. He has his faults, my dear sir, no doubt. But he is interested in





my fortunes, even at the expense of his own. I owe this somewhat, of course, to his love for my daughter, which you cannot have failed to observe; though, poor fellow, there is but little hope for him. Clara does not fancy him much.'

"And he holds your notes, at sight, too, for all these heavy sums?" persisted Mr. Lawson, as though turning a tough problem over in his perplexed thoughts. "Have you no fear of his some day troubling you with them?"

"Oh, dear, no! not the least. You wrong him. He is not that sort of man at all. It is a mere matter of form between us—the notes. With prosperous crops, I shall be at ease again in another year, and if not—why—it will only increase my obligation, which will be a pleasure, more than a disappointment to him."

"So the tutor seemed to think, but he says, 'Perhaps there is no danger; but why, if you will permit me to ask, have you not rather called upon your dearer friends, of whom I have heard so much, the Danvilles?'

"I thank you for the spirit which prompts your question, but I must beg that you will not again allude to such a thought. Once, indeed, it might have been different, but now, they are the last to whom I would turn. They, who the moment adversity comes upon me, desert me!"

"Desert you?"

"Yes: what is it, but my failing fortunes, which keeps the young Danville from hastening to fulfil the contract between our families, or, at least, of making the visit he promised us?"

"Your troubles make you unjust, my dear Colonel. This cannot be—there may be many reasons."

"Not so! Lieutenant Hutton—"

"The Lieutenant again!—"

"'Has more than once hinted as much, and he corresponds with young Mark, though he has never met him.'

"'Yes, I know,' said the tutor, with a smile, quite incomprehensible to the good Colonel.

"'How should you know?'

"'Pardon me, no matter—and so Mr. Hutton thinks that Mrs. Danville and her son shun you on account of your misfortunes? Where have they obtained their information?'

"'That I cannot imagine, unless it be through your friend, their overseer. This seems to be Hutton's idea.'

"'I think he is mistaken. However, such intelligence travels on the air without visible carriers.'

"'It has reached their ears at any rate, and the Lieutenant has half hinted to me, that young Danville has said that I am seeking to pass a dowerless bride upon him as an heiress! You will not wonder now, why I do not ask aid from the Danvilles.'

"'This is growing serious,' said Mr. Lawson, as he knit his brows and clenched his hands angrily, 'and the scoundrel shall pay for it!'

"'Nay, nay, my friend: I do not know why I have told you all this, but I do know, that I cannot suffer you to share my quarrel with Danville, should you happen to meet.'

"'Danville! Oh, you mistake! It is not he of whom I am thinking.'

"'My only consolation,' continues the Colonel, not noticing the musing air of his companion, 'is in the love of my daughter, who does not know, as I trust she never will know, aught of these things, and in the counsel and sympathy of—'

"'Your humble friend.'

"'That is much to me,' says the Colonel, warmly pressing the tutor's hand, 'but I referred to Madam Bernard.'

"Ah, Madam Bernard! and does she think of the Danvilles as the Lieutenant does?"

"On the contrary, she hopes that he is wrong."

"Ah! she *hopes!*"

"I do not understand your incredulous manner," says the Colonel, with an inquiring look.

"Pardon me, dear sir, if I allude to matters of a delicate nature. Have I not heard that you may, possibly, give your hand to Mrs. Danville, should your daughter wed her son?"

"Such, indeed, was once my thought."

"And, never, while Miss Hayward shall remain unmarried?"

"Never! that I have vowed."

"And would Madam Bernard rejoice to see your hopes fulfilled? Would there be no personal disappointment? Would—"

"No more, my dear friend, in this vein. If, as you hint, Madam Bernard has so much honoured me, she will not seek the accomplishment of her wishes by any false means. If she would, she would second, not contradict, the suspicions of the Lieutenant."

"Well, well, my dear Colonel. I have nothing ungallant to say of Madam, whom, indeed, I know only as a very agreeable woman; but I warn you against Lieutenant Hutton. I cannot think him so much your friend as he would seem!"

"You are prejudiced—unjustly prejudiced."

"So, indeed, I may be, so I hope I am;" says the tutor, suddenly remembering that any censure of Hutton, from his lips, may be placed to wrong motives; "so I hope I am;" and here, where the road forks, he bids adieu to the Colonel, saying to himself as he walks away:—

"Well, well! this is a pretty mess I am brewing; but I must even let it ferment, that I may see what spirits, good and bad, come from it! But of a certainty this Lieutenant is

a precious villain ; and I would not swear that Madam is immaculate. Neither of them will, I fear, come out of the trial unscathed. But Clara ! she, at least, is all truth and goodness ! Even should she not love the poor tutor enough to sacrifice for him all the pride and vanity she would surrender with her hand, yet will I, at least, save her from that scoundrel Hutton ! He shall be unmasked, before I leave him !

" Thus musing, he wanders on towards the house of Mr. Granger, the overseer of the Danville estates. He does not proceed far, before his ear catches the sound of familiar voices, coming, as it seems to him, from the recesses of a jasmine arbour near by. Thinking himself at liberty, under the circumstances, to play even the doubtful part of spy, he cautiously approaches the bower, and quietly putting aside the branches, is not surprised to see the Lieutenant and Clara's favourite maid, Pricilla, or 'Cilla, as she is generally called. He is curious to learn the purport of this conference, and well screened as he is by the thick leafage, no less than by the growing dusk of evening, he ventures to pause a moment and listen. The Lieutenant is speaking with impatient and vexed voice.

" ' So, so, then ! in ridding ourselves of this impudent young sultan, who fancies that he has but to come and throw down his imperial handkerchief when he pleases, to set the world in a struggle as to who shall have the honour of picking it up—in getting rid, I say, of Danville, we have but fallen into another difficulty !'

" ' And a much greater one, too, let me tell you,' says 'Cilla. ' Miss doesn't care a picayune for Massa Danville, and wouldn't have had him if he had asked her ever so sweet !'

" ' And you think that she loves this itinerant pedagogue—this Mr. Lawson ! bah ! you're a fool !'

"'Maybe, I am,' says the girl, with a sneering laugh—
'as I was when I listened to your fine talk!'

"'Pooh! don't vex me! What makes you think so, you little fool?'

"'Why, are they not always together? Do they not ride, read, sing, walk, talk together, all day long, from morning till night?'

"'Oh, that is only to spite me! She is too proud ever to think of marrying such a fellow!'

"'Spite you, indeed! Mighty little, to be sure, she thinks of you! And it is to spite you, I suppose, that she is always thinking of him, and talking about him in her sleep. Too proud! Yes, she is too proud not to please herself, whatever you or anybody else may say or think. So proud is Miss Clara, that she would marry the man she loves, though all the world should laugh at her, and though she had to work with her own white hands, hard as any nigger on the plantation.'

"'Umph,' says the Lieutenant to himself; 'that's not much! None of the knaves hurt themselves with labour! I should like to see them turned free for a while in the streets of Philadelphia or Boston, where, I warrant, they would earn more kicks than coppers.' Then, turning again to the girl,—

"'Have you done as I told you, and been seen with him often?'

"'Yes, I have.'

"'And does she suspect?'

"'O, ho! that's it, aye? That's why you wanted me to run after Master Lawson so much! I thought there was some mischief or other at the bottom of the mystery!' says 'Cilla, laughing outright at the new idea which possesses her. 'So you want to make her jealous? Miss Clara jealous of 'Cilla! he, he, he!'

"Stop your folly!" cries Hutton, striking the girl in his fury, so that she screams with pain.

"You kill me, you brute!—kill me, when you should love me best!"

"It is not I who have loved you too well! Do you understand, girl? It will be bad for you, let me tell you, if you do not!"

"As the poor girl's eyes gleam with resentful passion the man tempers his anger, and tries to speak in a gentler tone: to win her, when something tells him it will not be quite safe to command. This new tone is more successful, for she seems still to love, while she half despises, her unfeeling betrayer. As the tryst seems to be ending, when 'Cilla reluctantly promises to do his bidding, the tutor makes a hasty but cautious retreat, and continues his walk towards the overseer's.

"For a while his thoughts are wholly and happily occupied with the grateful proofs which 'Cilla's words have given him of Clara's love, and his fancy runs through a thousand gay imaginings. But a graver spirit seizes him, and he mutters as he walks—

"Things are indeed taking a serious aspect! I may be able to refute the calumnies against Danville, but as to the poor, friendless tutor, that is another affair. I must look to this girl! She evidently still loves this scoundrel, despite his cruel treatment of her; but it is as clear, too, that she is not wholly depraved, and may be used to punish, instead of to aid, his villainy. What will come next, I wonder! Truly I am getting to be a veritable Asmodeus, peeping into the hidden secrets of this family, so quiet to all outward appearance, and yet so turbulent within!"

"His soliloquy is now interrupted by the sound of approaching steps, and, looking up, he meets the eye of Mr. Granger, the Danville overseer, the very man of whom he is in quest.

"They talk together, long and gravely, but in a voice too low for our ears, even did it concern us to know the nature of their communications. As they are about to separate, the tutor still detains his friend, to tell him of the colloquy under the jasmine vines.

"'Umph!' says the overseer; 'this is very bad! We must be careful, or we shall get into a snarl from which it will be rather difficult to extricate ourselves. Indeed, I am half sorry that we have ventured at all in the—'

"'No fear, my good friend!' says the tutor gaily. 'All will end well!'

"'Yes, there is great fear! What if you should lose the confidence of the Colonel! Then Hutton's influence will be without a check, and others besides yourself may suffer.'

"'That is very true; but, at the worst, I can tell him all!'

"'Too late, perhaps!'

"'Too soon, at present, anyhow,' says the tutor hopefully.

"'But be cautious,' urges the doubting overseer; 'you have wily and unscrupulous foes to deal with.'

"'What, 'Cilla?'

"'Cilla! pooh! Hutton and the governess!'

"'You are persuaded, then, that Madam Bernard is concerned in the matter?'

"'Certainly! Does she not seek the hand of the Colonel, and will she not be glad of any means to break off, or to delay the affair with Mrs. Danville?'

"'True; but not that with the son, poor Mark. On the contrary, it is her cue to dispose of Miss Clara to somebody, since it is well known that the Colonel will never marry before his daughter.'

"'Of course. But that somebody is neither Danville nor yourself. The Lieutenant has a plan, you remember; and if he serves Madam, Madam must, in return, serve him. But my

greatest fear is, as I have said, that the Colonel's ear may be poisoned against you. Do you know that Hutton has already more than hinted to him that it is by your means that news has reached Mrs. Danville of his pecuniary difficulties, and that your object is to get Danville out of your own way?"

"The villain! In that case, I must lose no time in seeking Colonel Hayward and disabusing his mind."

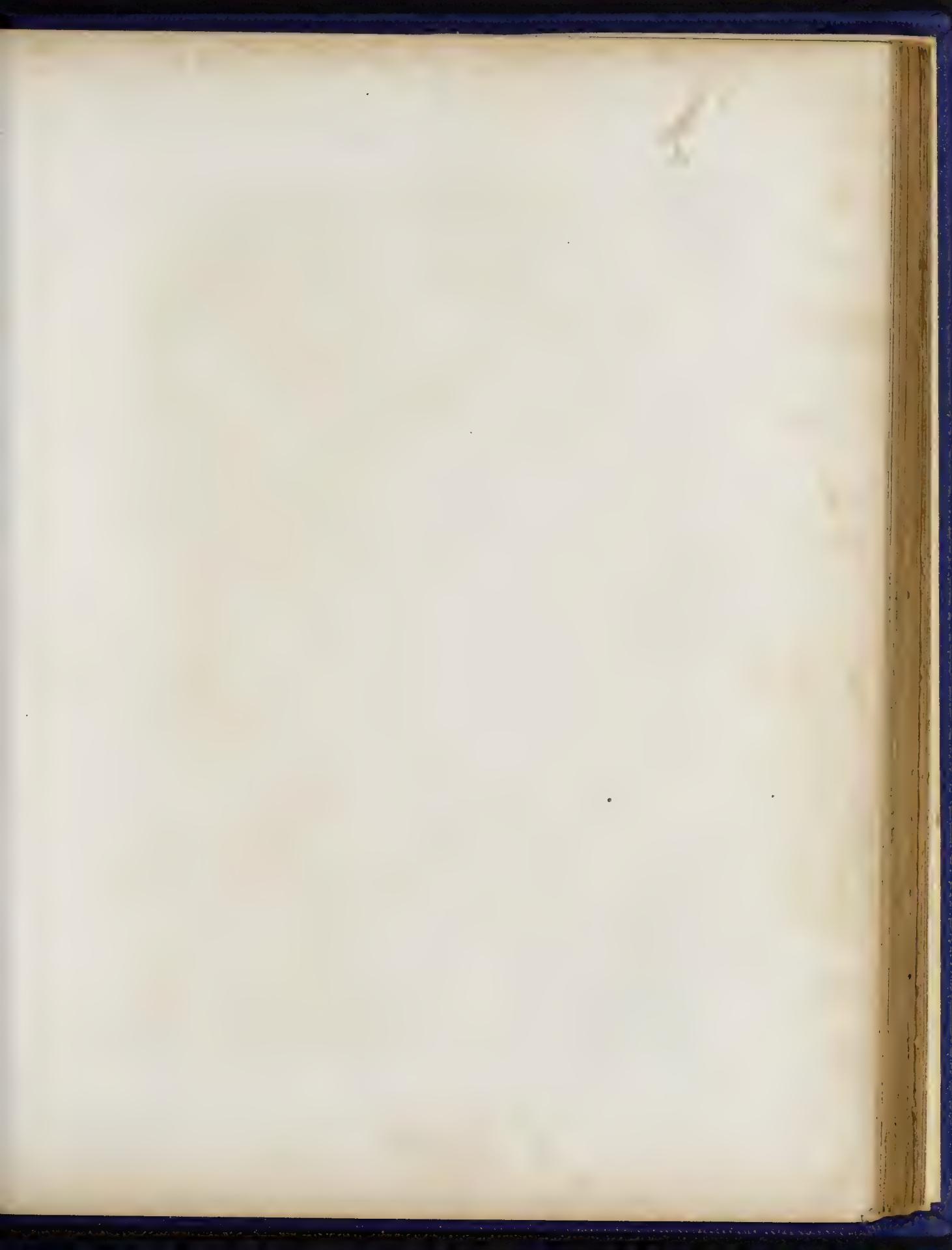
"And of course," says the overseer, laughing incredulously, "he will believe you! will not suppose you can be actuated by any but the purest motives in slandering his friend, the Lieutenant! That he will believe you at once, despite his senses, as Miss Hayward will believe you when you tell her that 'Cilla's tale is false! How is your story better than Hutton's?"

"You look more coolly and justly at the thing than I do," says the student, "and, had we not already gone so far, I too should begin to wish myself well out of it. But, as it is, we must watch and wait. Under any circumstances, I have your promise of silence."

"I shall not betray you," says the overseer, as he bids his companion good-night. "But you must not blame me for the consequences."

"This conversation, much as it occupies his thoughts for a while, is soon entirely forgotten by our hero, when, as time passes, even his suspicious eye fails to detect any alteration in the usual cordial manner towards himself, either of the Colonel or his daughter. To be sure the Lieutenant is, if possible, in yet more intimate communion with the family, and our hero is less fully and frequently honoured with the Colonel's personal confidences, but all this may very well be without any design whatever."

"It is thus that matters stand, when our student is suddenly required to ask leave of absence and withdraw for a while





from the scene. He is called away abruptly by intelligence of the serious illness of his mother. In his filial anxiety every thing else is forgotten, and waiting only for the opportunity of a private interview with Clara, and Mr. Granger the overseer, he takes the earliest boat down the river to New Orleans.

"His parting with the Colonel is so cordial as to allay any apprehensions which his interview with the overseer may have raised, though he does not quite understand the looks of intelligence which pass between his host and Clara and the Lieutenant, as he makes his adieu with a kind word for each—to the numerous servants who gather around him, and particularly as he takes leave of 'Cilla, who seems much more affected than the occasion demands.

"His host and the Lieutenant accompany him to the landing; and as the boat moves off, a heavy weight seems to move from Hutton's heart, and he breathes more freely, as a smile of satisfaction crosses his lips.

"'You will, I doubt not,' says the Lieutenant, as they ride quietly homewards, 'soon see more than one good cause to congratulate yourself upon having got rid of the schoolmaster. You observed how much the negroes seemed to like him as he bade them good-bye, and his familiarity with them. Indeed, he has always had a good deal more to say to them than he ought; and then, you know how freely he has often spoken about the evils of our slave system.'

"'That is true. But it has been of such evils as we shall do well to remedy; such evils as I see and condemn myself. He is sound enough in cardinal points.'

"'Of course, he would be a fool not to appear to be so; but now that he is gone, I will tell you of some matters that, out of kindness to him—for I rather like some things about the fellow—I have thus far hesitated to reveal. I may be wrong in not speaking to you on the subject before, but I

did not wish to bring him into trouble unnecessarily, even if he is really to blame, as, after all, he may not be.'

"Why, what new phantom frightens you, my dear boy?"

"No phantom, Colonel, or a very dangerous one. It is nothing less than a suspicion I have long had, that your respected tutor's residence here has been of no good to your servants."

"Why?" says the Colonel, in surprise. "You have not found any real grounds for your absurd fancy that he is an abolitionist?"

"Nothing more," says the Lieutenant, quietly, "than his questionable familiarity with the negroes, and certain anti-slavery tracts which 'Cilla tells me she has seen in his room, and which I myself have found in the cabins of some of those who are able to read them."

"Indeed: but this is a very serious charge, and I am surprised that your mistaken kindness should have led you to keep it so long to yourself. But, you must be wrong. If your other idea, that he has been bold enough to aspire to my daughter's hand, be true, he could not at the same time seek to ruin me!"

"O, you do not know to what absurd lengths the fanaticism of these people will carry them!"

"And, Granger! He and the tutor are strangely intimate! Surely, you do not think that *he* is concerned in any thing of the kind!"

"I have thought much of that, but I do not know what to make of it. But, perhaps," continues the Lieutenant, laughing, as a new fancy comes up, "perhaps it is only an ingenious plot of theirs to injure me."

"Injure you! How?"

"Why, by making me seem the offender! You may laugh at such an idea, but now that Lawson no longer fears

the rivalry of Mr. Danville, he would not stop at any means to get rid of me.'

"The Colonel seems to enjoy this thought of the Lieutenant's as a capital joke, and the Lieutenant himself finds it droll enough, as they continue to discuss it, until they again reach the hall.

"Little dreaming of the daring machinations against him, upon which Hutton had ventured under the security of his absence, our hero is equally astonished and exasperated, when a letter from Mr. Granger informs him of the new turn in affairs that followed the dialogue, which I have repeated, between the Colonel and the Lieutenant, as they were returning from the landing on the day of the tutor's departure. The overseer's communication informs his correspondent, not only of the strange suspicions against him, but, that the testimony of 'Cilla, and other servants of Madam Bernard, and the discovery among his baggage remaining at the hall, of inflammatory papers, has made the doubts certainties in the belief of everybody. But there is other news in Mr. Granger's letter, which affects the reader even more than the story of the infamous slanders which Hutton has so successfully circulated; the news of the reported engagement of Clara and his rival.

"'In this gossip, at least,' says the writer, 'there is much show of truth. I fear that Hutton has not only won the heart of our credulous friend, but, that he has him in his power through the heavy loans which he has made to him, and, that he makes his power felt. Though she may seem to do so, I cannot think that Miss Hayward likes her suitor better than before, but, we do not know what sacrifice she might be led to make for her father's happiness.'

"This startling intelligence, coupled with his repeated disappointments in Clara's neglect of her promise to write to him, fills him with most painful alarm, and makes him doubly

impatient at the circumstances which have kept him so long away from the Hall. Happily, these circumstances are passed, and the renewed health of his mother permits him to return without longer delay. Advising Mr. Granger of his immediate coming, and, enjoining upon him to take no measures in his vindication, which may betray the secret between themselves, our hero is again on his way to New Orleans.

"On his arrival here, his ill-fortune seems to pursue him more tenaciously than ever. New letters from Mr. Granger inform him that the Colonel has suffered additional and crushing losses, in the destruction of much of his estate by the ravages of a terrible crevasse, which losses leave him wholly at the mercy of his chief creditor, Hutton; and he is advised not to return at present, lest the violent feeling against him should endanger even his life.

"This advice has, of course, no weight with him; on the contrary, he does not lose an instant in the completion of his journey. Fortunately, he arrives at the Hall in safety, and demands to be confronted with his accusers, and to be heard in his defence. Though his old friendly greeting is wanting, the Colonel yet receives him with courtesy, and assures him that he shall have every opportunity to clear himself of the accusations against him. But it is now late, and the inquiry must be postponed until the morning.

"It is a singular scene that is now before us in the old dining-room of Mistletoe Hall. Such a silent, and such a varied group has never before gathered within the cheerful walls. There sits the Colonel, with a sternness of look quite foreign to his nature. Hutton's bold and confident air is not unmixed with visible symptoms of uneasiness, particularly when his eye happens to meet the steady, composed gaze of the tutor, as he stands yonder, with haughty and indignant bearing, more befitting a judge than a culprit. Madam Ber-

nard moves about with marked nervousness; and Clara, with 'Cilla by her side, is eagerly, though sadly, awaiting the dénouement of the scene. Mr. Granger, too, the overseer, is also present, quietly expectant.

"As the Colonel signifies to the tutor that he is ready to hear his explanation of the grave charges he has been grieved to find so strongly preferred against him, our hero hands him a package of letters, addressed to Mr. Mark Danville.

"'You once told me,' says he, 'that Mr. Hutton, though a stranger, was in correspondence with our friend Mr. Danville. You were quite right. They have corresponded during my residence here, and you now hold all the Lieutenant's letters! A hasty glance will show you that Mr. Hutton saved both myself and Mr. Granger the trouble of informing Mrs. Danville of certain matters, the knowledge of which you suppose to have influenced her to the forgetfulness of old friendship. They will teach you, also, that if there really is any change in Mrs. Danville's or her son's feeling towards you and your family, they are only such as you might expect to follow the curious tales which Mr. Hutton's vivid fancy has told them.'

"Various changes pass over the Colonel's countenance, as he long and silently, though eagerly, peruses the epistles. Bewildered with the stories they tell of the sinking fortunes of his family, of his own desire to be released from his engagements to the Danvilles, and Clara's openly expressed contempt for Mark, he looks up inquiringly now and then at the Lieutenant, who is ill at ease beneath his searching gaze.

"'A strange tale!' he says, at last, ending his reading, 'and certainly in your hand, Mr. Hutton!'

"'They are forgeries!' cries the Lieutenant, 'forgeries which he—pointing to the tutor—'has invented to injure me and screen himself.'

"'It is possible,' says the tutor, 'that Mr. Danville's replies

to these gratuitous communications, may be found in Mr. Hutton's possession—in his trunks, if he is not afraid to have them explored, lest at the same time there should be discovered some remains of the papers and tracts he has managed to place in my own!"

"Come, come, Colonel!" says the Lieutenant, with an ill-affected air of indifference, "this would be too insufferable if it were not too absurd! If there are such papers in my possession, which is possible, since Mr. Lawson seems so well informed, it is without my knowledge, and can prove nothing except a plot for my ruin."

"'A plot, indeed, for his ruin—a fatal plot,' says the tutor, calmly, 'but one laid with his own hands, and that of his accomplices, 'Cilla, and, I regret that I must say it, Madam Bernard!'

"All eyes were now turned upon Madam, who indignantly denied the charge, but Mr. Granger now offered such conclusive proofs against Hutton and herself, supported by the confessions of 'Cilla, that the consciousness of guilt was too evident in the looks of both, to admit further doubt.

"'Cilla's story, which was now retold, of the manner in which, by the Lieutenant's order, Madam Bernard and herself had distributed the condemning tracts, and had bribed the slaves to accuse the tutor, was so circumstantial, and so thoroughly corroborated by other confessions, that further examination seemed quite unnecessary, and the Colonel at once adjudged the Lieutenant to be guilty of the crimes wrongly and maliciously imputed to the tutor. The justice of this decision was well sustained by the rash and self-accusing violence with which the Lieutenant turned upon the Colonel with threats of vengeance, in the immediate demand of payment of the heavy bonds he held against his estate.

"Colonel Hayward hesitated for a moment at the fears

which these angry threats called up in his heart, when Mr. Granger informed the rude creditor that he need be under no apprehension on that score, as he was even then prepared to satisfy all his demands, having been furnished with the necessary means by his employer, Mr. Mark Danville.

"Such means and such instructions have long been in my hands," Mr. Granger adds, in explanation, to the wondering Colonel, "my own reports to Mrs. Danville and her son having led them to fear that they might at some time be needed. So you see, Colonel Hayward, that your friends have not forgotten you."

"At this new mortification, the infuriated Lieutenant has abruptly left the Hall, and Madam Bernard, too, has withdrawn in stately indignation. The Colonel is heartily apologizing to the tutor for his false suspicions, and thanking him for the service he has done him in exposing the real character of the Lieutenant.

"And now," cries he, joyfully, "we may again hope to see our friend Mark! Aye, Clara, my darling! We must welcome him the more heartily, when he does come, in remembrance of the kind and generous service he has just offered us through Mr. Granger."

"I shall be glad to see Mr. Danville, father," says Clara, as she, too, offers her hand in congratulation to the student; "but my heart——"

"Your heart, huzzy! Where is that, pray?"

"Here, father, where it has long been, in the keeping of——"

"My tutor? Impossible! You do not mean to say that you love——?"

"Your tutor, certainly, Colonel," says our hero, as he draws Clara yet nearer to his side, "but, at the same time, your—can my romance be forgiven?—your friend, Mark Danville!"

"Well, I'm heartily glad that the cat and I are out of the bag at last! He speaks truly, Colonel, and is none other than what he claims to be!" cries the overseer, in a tone of glad relief. "Mark Danville, as sure as I am William Granger and this old castle Mistletoe Hall!"

"We need not depict the general wonder and delight at this extraordinary revelation; the explanations and excuses which our hero makes about the fancy which prompted him to pay his court to Clara, unprejudiced pro or con by adventitious circumstances; the pardons which are accorded to him; the suspicions, 'all along,' that he was not exactly what he seemed, which suddenly come to everybody's memory; or, finally, the closer reunion which at a later day takes place between the seemingly estranged families of the Danvilles and of Mistletoe Hall."

At the conclusion of Mr. Vermeille's history our guests prepared to depart, but lingered yet awhile longer to hear a highly moral sequel, in which Mr. Brownoker dealt most poetical justice to the fugitives, Madam Bernard and Lieutenant Hutton, whom he thought the narrator had suffered to escape too easily.





CHAPTER IX.

"If you have sufficiently drained the Mississippi, gentlemen," said Mr. Deepredde, putting a sudden stop, with the authoritative rap of his official knuckles, to the irrelevant talk of our assembled guests, "we will make our way, via the Missouri, yet further into the heart of the great West. Here we have some pictures by the admirable painter-naturalist, Karl Bodmer, delightfully suggestive of wild adventure and stirring sport."

"Ah, ah, 'The Elkhorn Pyramid'*—'Herds of Bisons on the Upper Missouri'"—read Mr. Megilp, scanning the graphic drawings which now passed round the board. "Appetizing texts, indeed! Flakewhite may muse, and 'smile,' if he will, by the grassy edge of the caged fountain, or Vermeille may plot mischief in the shade of his umbrageous oaks; but give me the music of the rifle in the untrodden wilderness, and let me gossip with the red-man, the bison, and the bear. What is the crackle of anthracite to the blaze of the burning prairie, or the strains of a guitar compared with the jocund serenade

* Fronting Chapter I.

of hungry wolves! Here, far away from the conventionalities and the artificial needs and cares of life, is the place for genuine enjoyment. Here, where your trusty gun may bring you dainty meats for food and warm skins for clothing, beyond which you feel no other wants!"

"Your conception of the spirit and poetry of our present neighbourhood is the true one," said Mr. Deepredde; "for though the westward course of empire is rapidly scattering the seeds of other characteristics than those of forest life over the whole vast area of the wild plains which border the Missouri, their chiefest features are still those of Nature in her wild primitive life. Looking then, as we always should, for the individualities of the lands we visit, it is as proper that we be hunters and trappers west of the Mississippi, as that we should play the rôle of courtly gentlemen in Broadway. The travellers of the next generation will find a very different spirit in this our Western landscape, so rapid is the growth and extension of the population here. A few years hence, and Mr. Megilp will almost forget that he ever chased the buffalo over the plains which he will then find covered with peaceful firesides and smiling gardens. Such is the certain prediction of the weird voice of the impetuous locomotive, impatient to traverse the gorges of the Rocky Mountains; so says the murmur of that great city growing on the margin of the far-off Salt Lake; and such is the significance of the angry contentions, rife at this hour in our National Legislature, for the possession of the desert wilds of remote Nebraska.

"And now, gentlemen, with this perhaps too long exordium, we will make a hasty survey of the present physical aspect of the boundless regions commanded by the interminable Missouri and its many great affluents."

"Megilp," said Professor Scumble, "has travelled the country all over, and is just the showman we want."

"I will soon make the voyage for you," said that gentleman, in ready response to the Professor's demand, "though it is not a very short one, being no less than four thousand miles from the springs whence the great river flows to its confluence with the Mississippi. Though there are, of course, many points of extraordinary interest in all this long transit, yet, for hundreds of miles, the scenery is monotonous and stupid enough. We must, however, expect Nature to nod a little in such a jaunt. Here the waters roll through vast stretches of arid and sterile land, and yonder they are bordered, on either shore, by the rich alluvial fringe of the prairie meadows. Each of these prevailing aspects is interesting enough while novel to the eye, and the wearying excess of them may well be borne in consideration of the beauty of the bold bluffs, and yet more charming surprises, with which their monotony is frequently relieved.

"Such a surprise is the wonderful scenery at the famous 'Gates of the Rocky Mountains,' four hundred miles below the source of the river. Here, through a passage of a couple of leagues, the giant rocks rise perpendicularly from the water's edge to the towering height of twelve hundred feet. For miles, the dark waters in their narrow bed wash the base of these huge walls, so closely that not a foot-hold is anywhere to be found. It is a ghostly gorge on the sunniest day; but when its habitual gloom is deepened by the shadow of a stormy sky, its sentiment of solitude grows painfully impressive. Let a thunder-peal reverberate, as often happens, in a thousand wailing voices through the rocky windings of the glen, and let the blackness of darkness be increased by the vanished gleam of the lightning flash, and you think you have left this fair world far behind you.

"I was once, with some friends, traversing this passage at such a fearful moment as I have described, when we became

aware that we were pursued by a party of Indians. Noiselessly and breathlessly we urged on our canoes, pausing at intervals only to ascertain the progress of our foes, hope and despair alternately filling our hearts as we seemed, at one moment, to be gaining, and, at another, losing ground. It was only now and then that we caught a glimpse of the savages, and the sound of their unceasing and unearthly yells came to our ears with such uncertainty, that it gave us no clue to their position. The excitement of the struggle was intense as their random arrows flew about our ears, and as the deadly effect of our fatal shots was told to us in the death-cries from their own ranks.

"We took fresh courage, as the increasing light spoke our approach to the terminus of the glen, and gave us hope, once on terra firma, of distancing our foes. New fears, though, seized upon us, lest our scanty supply of ammunition should be exhausted before we reached the prayed-for sanctuary. Happily the dread vanished, as the arrows of the savages sensibly decreased in numbers, and the chorus of their infernal shrieks died away.

"When we at last leaped panting upon the open shore, not a sound of pursuit was to be heard, leaving us the glad hope that we had slain them all, or so many as to secure us from further danger. But not stopping to verify this supposition, we made all possible haste to reach the camp which we had so gaily left a few hours before. Once safe among our companions, we mentally vowed to be wary henceforth how we ventured within the Gates of the Rocky Mountains!

"But I am forgetting my office of topographer. Some hundred miles or so below these colossal Gates—I wish Sampson had been with us at the time of the adventure I have narrated, that he might have toppled them down on the heads of our rascally pursuers—is yet another scene of equally grand

though very different character—the ‘Great Falls,’ a worthy peer of Niagara itself. The river at this point descends, by a succession of cascades and rapids, no less than three hundred and fifty-seven feet in sixteen miles. The perpendicular falls, commencing down the stream, are first, one of eighty-seven feet, and others, successively, of nineteen, forty-seven, and twenty-six feet. Between and below these are continual rapids, from three to eighteen feet descent.

“Below the Great Falls there is no serious obstacle to navigation, excepting in the shallowness of the waters during seasons of drought. At such periods the steamboats often meet with much difficulty in ascending the river. The current of the Missouri is much stronger than that of the Mississippi, and so turbid as to have given it its name, meaning ‘mud river.’

“Numerous as are the objects of interest in the landscape of this section of our country, which tourists have already discovered, there are doubtless yet hidden within the mountain fastnesses, many undreamed-of wonders, whose fame is still to be made. We must remember that Missouri is a new State, and its tributary country still a wild and unexplored region. Its great capital city of St. Louis is described in the Gazetteer of Dr. Beck, no longer ago than in 1823, as ‘a flourishing post-town!’

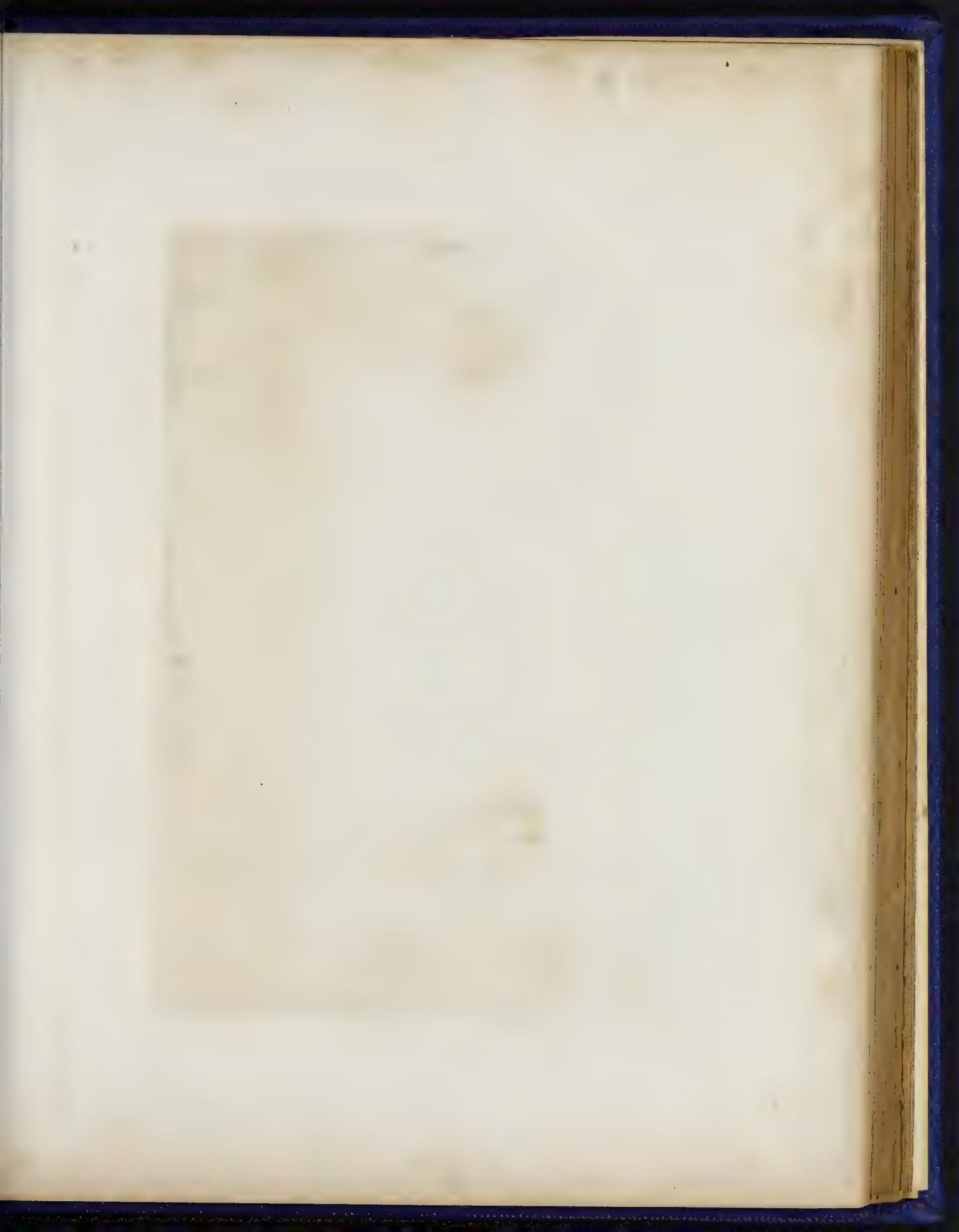
“Not taking into account that omnipotent ‘manifest destiny,’ to which we all so confidently look for many grand results, besides the settlement of our whole Western territory, Missouri possesses sources of wealth which must make her march to power quick and notable. She has a magnificent area of productive soil, suitable for every species of vegetation, excepting that of the tropics, and an abundance and variety of mineral stores already famous the world over.

“All this for the future—for the present, this grand territory is a perfect paradise to the hunter, yielding him in abun-

dance every species of game, from partridges to panthers, from prairie hens to shaggy buffaloes."

"There is one very striking feature of this region, which Megilp has very strangely omitted to mention," said the Professor, recalling the gossip which was straying towards other subjects, when Mr. Megilp intimated the close of his story. "I allude to the marvellous fissures which sometimes so suddenly open in the immense arid plains or steppes, that stretch down by such slow and imperceptible descent from the snowy peaks of the Rocky Mountains. I find a graphic description of these remarkable scenes, in Mr. 'Kendall's Santa Fe Expedition,' which you will, perhaps, permit me to read. The traveller is passing the grand *Plano Estacado*, which sweeps from the base of the mountains to the head waters of the Arkansas and other rivers. He has already wended his wandering way through one of these fearful chasms, and is rejoicing to find himself once more on the open sun-lit prairie, when, without the slightest intimation in tree or shrub of a change in the monotonous landscape before him, he finds himself at the mouth of a yawning gorge, which exceeded in grandeur anything he had yet beheld.

"'One by one,' he says, 'we left the double-file ranks, and lost in amazement, rode up to the verge of the terrible abyss. In depth, it could not be less than eight hundred feet, was from three to five hundred yards in width, and at the point where we first struck it, the sides were nearly perpendicular. A sickly sensation was felt by all as we looked down, as it were, into the depths of the earth. In the dark and narrow valley below, an occasional spot of green relieved the eye, and a small stream of water now rising to the view, then sinking beneath some huge rock, was foaming and bubbling along. Immense walls, columns, and, in some places, what appeared to be arches, were seen standing, modelled by the wear of the





water, undoubtedly, yet so perfect in form that we could with difficulty be brought to believe that the hand of man had not fashioned them. The rains of centuries falling upon our immense prairies had here formed a reservoir, and their workings upon the different veins of earth and stone had made these strange and fanciful shapes.

"Before reaching the chasm, we had crossed numerous large trails leading a little more to the west than we were travelling; and the experience of the previous day had led us to suppose that they all terminated at a common crossing near by. In this conjecture we were not disappointed, for a trot of half an hour brought us into a large road, the thoroughfare, along which millions of Indians, buffaloes, and mustangs had evidently travelled for years. Perilous as the descent appeared, we well knew that there was no other near. The leading mule was again urged forward, the steadier and older horses were next driven over the sides, and the more skittish and intractable brought up the rear. Once in the narrow path which led circuitously down the descent, there was no turning back, and our half maddened animals finally reached the bottom in safety. Several large stones were loosened from their fastenings by our men during this frightful descent; these would leap, dash, and thunder down the precipitous sides, and strike against the bottom far below us, with a terrific and reverberating crash.

"We found a running stream on reaching the lower end of the chasm, on the opposite of which was a romantic dell, covered with short grass and a few scattered cotton-woods. A large party of Indians had encamped on this very spot a few days previous, the wilted limbs of the trees, and other signs, showing that they had made it a resting place. We, too, halted a couple of hours to give our horses an opportunity to graze and rest themselves. The trail, which led up on the

opposite side, was discovered only a short distance above us, to the south, winding up the steep and rugged sides of the acclivity.

"' As we journeyed along this dell, all were again struck with admiration at the strange and fanciful figures made by the washing of the waters during the rainy season. In some places perfect walls, formed of reddish clay, were seen standing, and were they anywhere else, it would be impossible to believe that other than the hand of man had formed them. The veins of which these walls were composed were of even thickness; very hard, and ran perpendicularly; and, when the softer sand which had surrounded them was washed away, the veins still remained standing upright, in some places a hundred feet high, and three or four hundred in length. Columns, too, were there, and such was their appearance of architectural order, and so much of chaste grandeur was there about them, that we were lost in wonder and admiration. Sometimes the breastworks, as of forts, would be plainly visible; then, again, the frowning turrets of some castle of the olden time. Cumbersome pillars of some mighty pile, such as is dedicated to religion or royalty, were scattered about; regularity was strangely mingled with disorder and ruin, and Nature had done it all. Niagara has been considered one of her wildest freaks, but Niagara sinks into insignificance when compared with the wild grandeur of this awful chasm—this deep abyssal solitude, as Carlyle would call it. Imagination carried us back to Thebes, to Palmyra, and to ancient Athens, and we could not help thinking that we were now among their ruins.'

" His passage out of this place, Mr. Kendall tells us, was made with the greatest difficulty, after being completely shut out from the world during six long hours. When he again found himself upon the level prairie, and, after proceeding

some hundred yards, looked back, not a trace of the immense chasm could he discover."

"It is," said Mr. Megilp, "one of the favourite modes of hunting the—"

"Pardon me for interrupting you a moment," said the chairman, "but I would remark, before the conversation turns from the topography of our subject, that, having already travelled so far westward, it would be very agreeable could we cross the snow-covered crests of the great Rocky Mountains, and, after a peep at the wonders of California and Oregon, look out upon the wastes of the Pacific. Despite the but partial explorations yet made of these wild territories, enough of beauty and interest has already been found, to lure thither the hunter of the picturesque, in the teeth of all the dangers and difficulties of the journey. I should like to look upon the 'stern and rock-bound coast' of our newly-found Dorado, and watch the rising and the setting of the sun from the crests of her mighty hills, clad in everlasting snow. Think, gentlemen, of the Cascade Mountains of Oregon, with an elevation of fourteen thousand feet! There's a morning stroll for you! After such a feat, you might do the Camel's Hump, or Mount Washington, in a quiet evening walk! Then, there are the Grand Dalles or basaltic precipices of the Columbia river, in its passage through these same giant hills; and I know not what other marvellous things; no one knows, as yet. Years hence, long after we shall have laid down our worn-out pencils, the artists of America will revel in the rich beauties of this now unknown Western world.

"Now, Megilp, if your speech has not spoiled by keeping," continued the chairman, "let us hear what you have to say about the buffaloes."

"It is a common method of hunting those animals, among the prairie tribes, I was about observing, to drive the infuriated

herds over the edges of those great chasms, of which Professor Scumble has been talking, where, bounding from crag to crag down to the dark bed of the horrible abyss, their torn carcasses are heaped up in frightful hecatombs of death.

"Another process of securing the buffalo, is that known as the 'Prairie Surround.' Mr. Webber, in his admirable book about 'Wild Scenes and Wild Hunters,' graphically describes this mode of hunting. 'The widely scattered line of the surround,' he says, 'inclosing some valley containing a herd, is rapidly closed up by the yelling warriors composing it, who drive the frightened animals from its circumference, urging towards a centre, where, precipitated in the headlong crush upon each other, the helpless mass sways, bellowing, while amidst the cloud-dusts of their collision, the forms of the warriors, who have leaped from their horses upon the backs of the buffaloes, may be dimly seen treading the horned tumult with fierce gestures, and wielding the long lance as a rope-dancer does his balance pole, with the slight difference, that with nearly every step they thrust its sharp point down through joint and marrow, between the spine and scull of some new victim, whose shaggy back they have but pressed in passing with their moccasined feet. Thousands are thus slaughtered in a few minutes. This scene, as weird and wild as it is real, tamed, by contrast, all midnight phantasmagoria, beneath the blaze of noon-tide."

"Megilp has no doubt slaughtered many an infuriated bull, in his day," said Mr. Brownoker; "perhaps managed an entire 'surround,' all alone. He is a 'mighty hunter' before—himself! What say you, gentlemen, shall we have

Megilp's Experience in Buffalo-Hunting.

"To tell the truth," answered Nimrod, "I never accomplished much in the buffalo line, having attempted it only once, and then with but indifferent success. Indeed, I believe that I rather lost, than gained, by the operation. We had pitched our tent near the edge of a great prairie, on the eve of an eventful day, and our hearts leaped at the approaching realization of that most romantic hope of forest-life, a buffalo-hunt. As we sat, to a late hour, talking, in the quiet moonlight, of the valiant deeds the morrow was to witness, a half incredulous, half sneering smile would come occasionally to the grim lips of the swarthy rangers, whom we had secured as guides and tutors. With the thousand cautions and hints which they gave us touching the process of the expected chase, they maliciously mixed up many tales of bloody misadventure, which might have intimidated less resolute souls than ours.

"When we sallied eagerly forth, under the glittering light of an early morning sun, our warlike aspect—armed as we were, some with lances pointed with sharp blades, others with murderous rifles, and others, again, with that yet more fatal weapon—when in skilful hands—the Indian bow—contrasted vividly with the quiet sentiment of the verdant plains over which we were moving, glittering and redolent as the happy landscape was, with the rainbow-beauty and the Araby odours of myriad beautiful flowers. It did not seem possible that so smiling an Eden could be the home of creatures uncouth and wild as the burly bison; still less, that it could ever be the terrible theatre of such scenes of deadly struggle as that we were anticipating.

"For a while, as we vainly looked for signs of the enemy, we felt that the time and scene were indeed unsuited to our cruel purpose; but there, at last, far away across the broad savannah, looking in the hazy distance like a small black cloud upon the horizon, were the grazing herds, quite unconscious of the fate awaiting them—and so they continued to be, as, spurring our trusty nags, we scoured the plain in hot pursuit. It was not until we had approached quite near to them, that they became aware of their danger; when suddenly pausing in their rough gambols, they raised a bellowing thunder of affright, and dashed in mad panic over the prairies. Now, indeed, we felt that we were in that fairy land of which our childhood and youth had so often and so wildly dreamed: and when the first clear ring of the rifle, was followed by the death roar and heavy fall of a ponderous bull, and a perfect frenzy of blind terror had seized upon the swaying herds, we forgot everything, but the all-absorbing passion of the hour. Blood, blood, was the terrible cry of our hungry souls, as if we had never had gentler nutriment in all our life. On we bounded, now after, now in the midst of the maddened brutes. Carcass after carcass fell panting upon the torn and trampled plain, under the fatal balls, or the no less sure lances of the veterans of our party: but as yet neither my amateur companions nor myself had done more than keep out of the way of the ugly beasts.

"This 'masterly inactivity,' said I to myself at last, may have answered well enough for Fabius, but will never do for Megilp! And raising a mental cry of 'Liberty or death!' I put after an astounding creature, big and black as the devil himself.

"'Only chuck a little salt on his tail, and you'll get him sartain,' cried an old ranger, sarcastically, as he observed the culmination of my desperate purpose.

"Sing him a hymn; give him "Old Hundred" in his right ear," shouted another, maliciously, "that'll fetch him at wonst, sure as snags."

"Coax him gentle, and you'll saddle him nice," laughed a third, as an unlooked for lunge of the creature, brought him so near to me, that for an instant, half losing my seat, I fell upon his shaggy back. In a twinkling, however, I shied off, and raising my 'weapon,' let fly both the barrels at once, with such unexpected success, that down came the buffalo with a bellow and a crash, that made me for an instant, think that the prairie had 'bust.' Unfortunately, though, he keeled over the wrong way, and dropped plump under my horse's nose, placing me in imminent jeopardy of impalement on his ugly horns. I began to feel a higher esteem for Fabius, when a timely arrow whizzed by my swimming head, and entering that of my victim, saved my life—but not my breeches. The 'envious Casca' had made sad work there, and the laugh which I had levelled, not long before, at the grotesque costume of our guide, was now, most vexatiously turned back upon myself.

"Ain't the gentleman afeard of catching cold?" asked one tenderly.

"I'm blasted sorry I ain't got a handkerchief to lend him," said another with almost tearful sympathy.

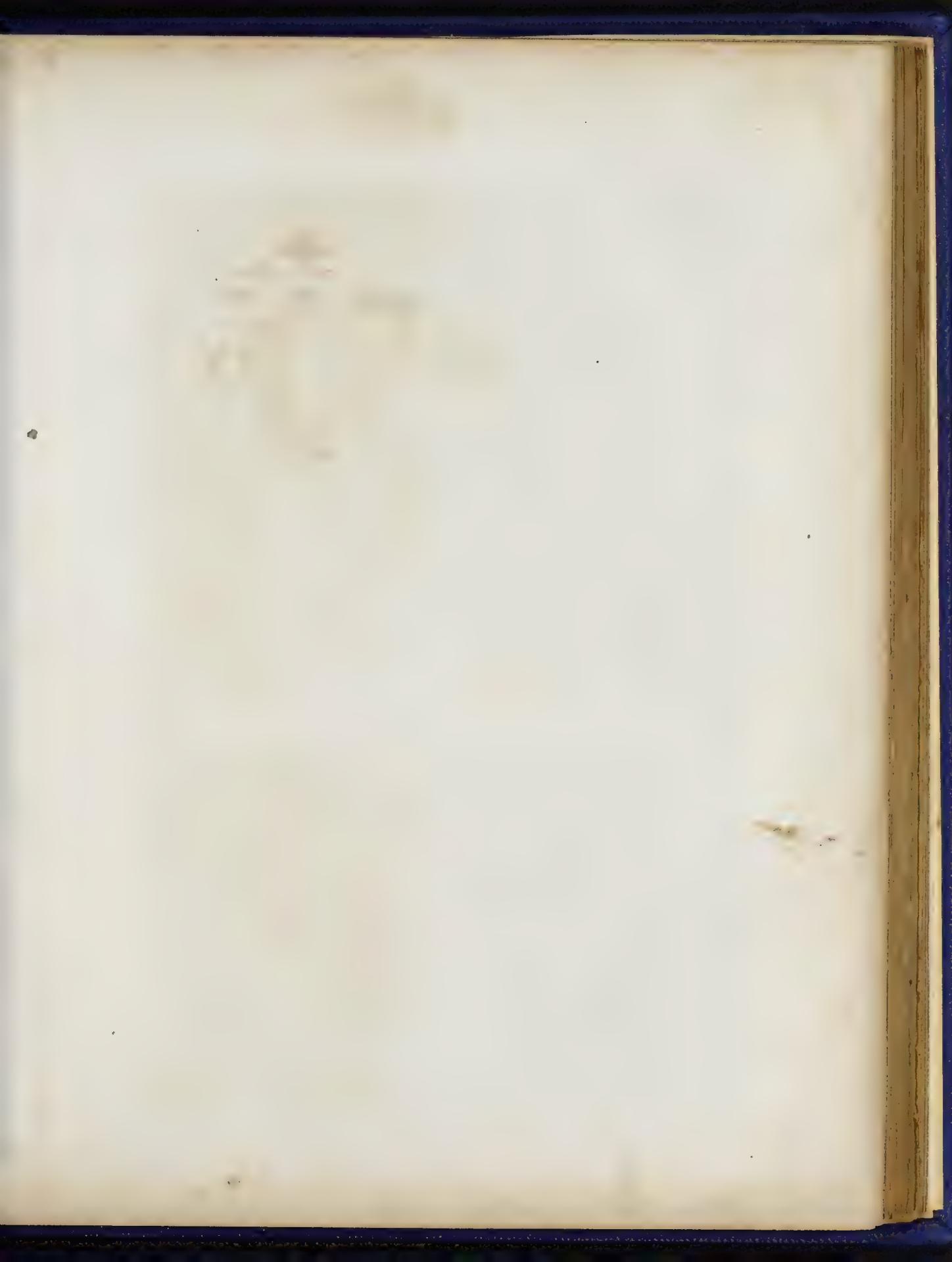
"What a pictur' he'd be in the settlements," added a third.

"Never mind, don't cry," said a fourth. "It's rayther unpleasant of course. But the hide will make you a new pair, and one more to be depended on than them woman's duds."

However, I managed to bear up against all this laughing raillery, when I considered how much worse the event might have been; and other thoughts drew the attention of my comrades from my misadventure. Then the chase over, there followed the preparations for taking care of the fruits—I mean

the meats of our butchery, and the care of concocting the repast, for which our appetites were so well sharpened.

"But I assure you, gentlemen," said Mr. Megilp, as he closed his anecdote, "I never sacrificed another pair of trowsers at a buffalo-hunt."





CHAPTER X.

"IN our passage homeward from the far West, we shall find it very desirable, if not necessary, to traverse the waters of the beautiful Ohio," said Mr. Deepredde, "and this episode will not, I assure you, gentlemen, prove the least interesting in our journey.

"Did the scenery of *la belle rivière* not offer to the eye so many a winding bout of linked loveliness as we delight in here, there is yet matter for a world of pleasing thought in the contemplation of the prosperous fortunes of the many great States which lie upon its banks, and whose resources it has so much served to develop. As we sail, we gaze in charmed surprise, upon the thriving towns and the fertile fields of Illinois and Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky, all wildernesses half a century ago, and now holding, in wealth, population, and power, the highest rank among the nations of our vast confederacy. I must confess that I should like to dwell long upon this glorious picture of human enterprise and happiness, but that such a portrait, however seductive, would carry us beyond the scope of these reunions. And I am impatient, moreover, to read to you a graphic description of the pictorial

attraction of our river, in some extracts from an unpublished letter to our estimable host. The writer is an intelligent lover of Nature,* and is thoroughly familiar with the scenes of which he speaks.

“‘John Randolph,’ he says, ‘had the misfortune upon his only trip to the Ohio, to find, going and coming, ice upon one occasion, and low water upon the other. ‘So this is your beautiful river!’ he cried; ‘frozen one half of the year, and dried up during the other!’ But this sarcastic note of our grumbling Virginian must be taken with a due degree of allowance for his usual extravagant style. Though the Ohio is not as free from ice as the Rio Grande, nor as deep as the Hudson, yet it was not inaptly that the early French explorers called it ‘the beautiful river.’

“‘For a thousand miles it flows from the rising towards the setting sun, in almost the same parallel of latitude, and, while it has not the broad, sweeping banks of the Mississippi, not the palisaded heights and the bold mountain borders of the Hudson, each shore offers a grateful medium between the abruptness of the one, and the level monotony of the other.

“‘Two long lines of gentle hills mark its course from its source, almost without interruption, to its confluence with the father of waters; between these two picturesque ranges, it pursues its quiet way, undisturbed, excepting at Louisville, by rapid or cascade whatever. The bed of the stream is usually a yellow sand, thickly sprinkled with blue and gray pebbles, with occasionally a few shells of periwinkle and bivalve muscles, which being left upon the sand-bars by the falling of the waters in August and September, afford a rare feast for the crows and the congregations of buzzards, who wheel and circle gracefully through the sultry autumnal air, or sit upon the

* W. W. Fosdick, Esq.

dead boughs of tall trees, sunning their outstretched wings. At this season may also be seen poised in mid air upon flapping pinions, like a king-fisher, the great fish-hawk, who often, through cowardice, loses his game to the bald eagle, the monarch of all that feathered world. Here and there, knee deep in the slow current, the blue heron stalks carefully along in fear of frightening his victims, the buffalo-perch or the red-horse, which are waving their fins as they lie sucking upon the bottom; or standing upon some snag which protrudes from the water, is the lesser bittern, drawn up into the smallest possible space, apparently fast asleep; but let some unconscious minnow or silver-side unfortunately swim by, and in an instant an arrowy neck is shot out, and Mr. Silver-side snapped up by our sleepy acquaintance.

"The banks of the Ohio are, perhaps, more indebted for their beauty to the majestic forests with which they are clothed than to any other feature; and, like great emeralds set in the silver stream, the exquisite islands which dot all its course, are the best evidence of the rich alluvion that has fed these forests from time untold. Civilization has made, and is making many ravages and inroads upon the beauty of these islands, but those who have seen them in their primitive state can never forget their charms. Blennerhasset's Island is a famous and favourite spot, but the crown-jewel in this cluster of the Ohio brilliants, is the beautiful DIAMOND ISLAND in the vicinage of Louisville.

"This island is a microcosm of the valley of the Ohio—an arboreal and floral epitome of its productions. I saw it when not an axe had touched its primeval forest growth, nor the foot of domestic cattle crushed the green watery leaves which covered the ground. Here, in the latter end of April or the beginning of May—according as the season was hot or cold—could be seen a sight, in the way of flowers, which surpasses

fable. Over an area half a mile in width and two miles in breadth, stretched one unbroken bed of blossoms—one mass of multi-coloured bloom. Stately Indian turnips held up their striped purple tulip bowls; bright yellow golden-cups touched glasses, and drank the morning dew with the broad-leaved blue-bells. A carpet of violets, azure, white, and gold, overlaid the dark floor of this beautiful island; and with dainty crow-feet, red-spiked pinks, and such familiar flowers, were commingled a multitude of strange and nameless blossoms of rarest form and hue. But it is in its forest trees that this spot presented the most wondrous sight; here the pawpaw—usually but a shrub—rose from out this rich soil to the high dignity of its proudest woody peers, and mingled its broad green leaves and brown blossoms with the box elder, the water-willow, and the red-bud; while rising far above these, and towering to a height which no tree ever attains in the eastern portion of our Union, could be seen the black-berry, the cotton-wood, the black walnut, the red elm, the white-armed hollow sycamore, and that glorious monarch of all Western trees, the gigantic yellow poplar—often five feet in diameter and a hundred and fifty feet in height—rose here in its full majesty. But to those who have never seen the original forests of the West, it will be impossible to convey an idea of the extent and luxuriance of the wild grape vine. Every tree was interlaced with its winding folds, and its great tendrils, frequently more than a hundred feet in length, disported themselves in the sunshine upon the crowns of the tallest trees; or, when winter had stripped the forest of its foliage, the clustering fruit hung thickly in purple bunches; while, like trees of very fire, the Indian arrow bushes flamed through all the island, with their scarlet berries, giving a most startling and brilliant effect in times of snow.

"But these scenes are passing; the primitive forests melt

away; the deer is no longer to be seen bounding through the yellow blooming spice-wood bushes; the black and glossy wild turkey cannot be seen scratching among the dry leaves for beech-nuts; nor is the thunder of the pheasant's drum to be heard upon the mossy log at even-tide.

"The raftsmen who used to come down lazily upon their loads of lumber and shingles, floating with the tide, are disappearing; and with them, the flat-boatmen and the wood-boatmen are fast being lost sight of, as their predecessors the keel-boatmen have been long since; steamboats have taken their place, and the old fellows who used to wind their long tin horns and send their merry music up through the hills, have vanished, feeling, that for them, "Othello's occupation's gone!"

"The last of these pioneers of the waters of the Ohio that I saw, was the old knot of fishermen who used to camp upon the pebbly sand-bar which stretched up from the head of Diamond Island—in their weather-beaten tent, drawing their seines by night, and hunting or sleeping by day. But the gray squirrel that fed upon the walnuts, and the wild pigeons that plucked the purple clusters of the grape, are gone. The game, too, has fled, and the idle, harmless hunters and fishers with their blue striped or red flannel shirts are to be seen there no more. The axe has been busy. Cattle and hogs have trodden upon the wild flowers' richest bed, and the bloom has gone from Nature's garden forever. Art cannot restore it. Cultivation and science may make new plants to spring up, but the Eden beauty of the scene is past away, beyond the ingenuity of man to restore. Its vanished loveliness, though, will ever dwell in my memory, as the Hesperian Island of the Occident."

"Our correspondent has made no mention," said Mr. Brown-oker, "of the notable object on the Ohio which forms the study of our evening's sketch. The famous cave in the rock

is one of the curiosities of Illinois. Its grand mural portico, presents, as we approach, a very picturesque aspect. We enter the cavern, under a semicircular arch of about eighty feet span, and twenty-five feet in height, and, ascending gradually from the bed of the river, we are enabled to penetrate readily to the terminus, at a distance of less than two hundred feet. Though the scene is one of no slight pictorial beauty, its great attraction lies in the tales which it tells of adventure and crime. At different periods it has been the dreaded haunt of various bands of murderous vagabonds. In years gone by, the stout-hearted boatmen of the Ohio passed the lawless spot with nervous trepidation."

"Speaking of caverns, a common commodity hereabouts," said Mr. Asphaltum, "we are now on the threshold of the great Mammoth Cave, the boast of Kentucky. This surprising freak in the handiwork of Nature is one of the most remarkable of its class in the world. Its spacious chambers must have made fitting dens and lairs for the mastodons and other giant animals which once flourished here. It is the wondering work of days to follow the windings of this mighty Tartarus, and examine its numberless chambers, galleries, stalactites, mounds, and streams. It has been explored for many dark miles, without any sign of a terminus. The scale of this strange subterranean architecture, may be inferred from the grand dimensions of its stupendous halls; one of which covers an area of two acres, and is arched by a single rocky dome a hundred and twenty feet in height. This famous cave is the resort, not only of the curious lover of Nature, but of invalids who seek the benefit of its equable temperature. Human bones are found here to such extent, as to lead to the belief that the cave was a place of sepulture to the races which formerly occupied the land."

"Kentucky," said Mr. Blueblack, "is deservedly honoured

with the possession of this wondrous scene. This hardy State is the oldest of the Western nations, and the most attractive of the Ohio group, both in picturesque charms and in historical record. Under the indomitable Boone, Kentucky led the perilous van in the settlement of this region, suffering for her sister States all the fearful hardships and bloody wounds which are ever the lot of the bravest. It is a thrilling story, that of her early life: dyed with the blood of her ill-fated people.

"The physical aspect of the country is, in many parts, of remarkable interest, displaying long ranges of mountain height; while the noble rivers which she sends into the Ohio, far excel, in beauty, any portion of that great water. The Kanawha, which we visited while in Virginia, the Cumberland, the Tennessee, the Kentucky, and the famous "Salt River," of political waggery, all, at intervals, abound in noble themes for the pen and the pencil. I do not remember ever to have seen a more inspiring sight than that which I once enjoyed, gazing abroad from the summit of the Lookout Mountain, in the extreme north-western nook of Georgia, over a rich and limitless valley where flowed the winding waters of the Tennessee! The Kentucky River, in its long course, makes many grand passes through the hills, forming rich examples of wild river view—chasm, crag, and waterfall: you remember, perhaps, Mr. Willis's glowing, yet truthful memories of a recent visit to the banks of the Kentucky.

"The States bordering on the northern shore of the Ohio—Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio itself—do not possess any very striking pictorial interest beyond the novel impressions which the stranger will receive gazing upon the great flowered prairies. To Illinois may be applied much of what has been said here about the Mississippi Valley, of which it is a portion. The shores of the Illinois River offer, here and there, bluffs of commanding heights; famous among which are the sandstone

precipices of Starved Rock, The Lover's Leap, and Buffalo Rock. The "Cave" of our portfolio, as we have said, appertains to the domain of Illinois.

"In Indiana, the chief notabilities are the specimens of those subterranean abodes so abundant in the West. The great cavern called the Wyandotte, is claimed to rival the grandeur even of the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. The Wabash, the principal river, flows chiefly through table and swamp lands, and comes in the same pictorial category as the streams of the South West. Here is that famous battle ground of Tippecanoe, where General Harrison repulsed the Shawnees in 1811, and won a watchword to beat the Democrats in the Presidential struggle of 1841—for all remember, gentlemen, the magic refrain of 'Tippecanoe and Tyler too!' Lake Michigan skirts the north-western part of Indiana for some forty miles, and opens to it the valuable commerce of our vast inland seas."

"Apropos," said Mr. Deepredde, "Blueblack's allusion to the Great Lakes reminds me that we shall not find a better opportunity than the present, to make the hasty visit due from us to the States of their vicinage. Here we shall shake hands with little Michigan, not a very handsome lass, and with buxom Wisconsin, and her Western neighbour, the young Iowa. The surface of the last mentioned States is generally composed of great rolling prairies—the pastures where the Great Spirit of the red-men feeds his flocks and herds of buffalo, and elk, and deer. Wisconsin is fruitful in objects of antiquarian interest: earth-works fashioned in the shape of men and animals, and evidently the achievement of races, antecedent to our Indian tribes. At Aztalan, there is a venerable fortification, five hundred and fifty yards long, nearly three hundred feet wide, and between four and five in height. Another work, resembling a man in a recumbent attitude, one hundred and twenty feet





long, and thirty feet across the trunk, is to be seen near the blue mounds. And at Prairie, another, like unto a turtle, fifty-six feet in length! Some of these remains resemble the extinct mastodon, while others are so defaced, as to entirely obscure the design of the architects. A part of that beautiful expansion of the Mississippi, called Lake Pepin, lies in this State. Among the links of the mural precipices, which enclose the waters of Lake Pepin, is the celebrated Maiden's Rock, a charming cliff of five hundred feet, which Mr. Asphaltum forgot to show on his panorama of the Mississippi. Nearly all the rivers of Wisconsin present attractive pictures of rapid, and waterfall, and mural bluff: and like the Territory of Minnesota, too, of pond and lake.

"In the last mentioned feature, Minnesota is wonderfully rich. The north-eastern corner of the map of this Territory is completely riddled with the little black holes which stand for these sparkling eyes of Nature. Not to mention Lakes Superior and Michigan, on its northern and eastern boundaries, respectively, there is Lake Pepin, the Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, Red, Devil, and Spirit Lakes, and many others. These clear pebbly waters sometimes cover an area of no less than forty miles.

"Minnesota, too, has many picturesque rivers, flowing into the Missouri on her western limits, eastward into the Mississippi, and northward into Hudson's Bay.

"In Michigan, there are many small lakes, which give beauty, here and there, to her generally flat and uninteresting surface. The Straits of Mackinaw, which divide the northern and southern peninsulas, and connect the waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, are replete with attractive scenery. The bold shores of the Island of Mackinaw in these Straits, rise to a perpendicular height of nearly two hundred feet. Not far off, is the narrow channel of St. Mary's, linking the floods of

Huron and Lake Superior, and opening to us a view of the far-famed Pictured Rocks, formed of parti-coloured sand-stone, and calling up dreams of vanished or fabled architecture, in their fantastic fashionings."

"The Pictured Rocks," said Mr. Megilp, the talk here coming to a halt; "that reminds me of an adventure of mine, thereabouts, which, if you are, as I think you must be, tired with your long travel, I will relate. It promised to be a squally affair, but turned out

Nothing after All.

"You remember what I said to you, at Tallulah, about my propensity to quiz the natives, in assuming all sorts of characters and professions? At the time to which I now refer, I took a fancy to be deaf as a post, making it necessary for my companion, and all whom I met, to bellow like bulls, in order that I might hear and understand them. In this way I often sorely perplexed and confused the worthy people. Thus, our hostess would ask if I liked my tea seasoned—referring to a proposed admixture of sugar and cream—when I would very innocently tell her that they were all very well when I left home, excepting the twins, who were teething, and had the measles terrible hard.

"'No, no! not the children! I asked, 'would you like—'

"'Thirteen altogether, at present, and a good prospect for more, thank you! As likely a looking squad of boys and girls as you would wish to see very near you. Though, to be sure, the twins are—'

"'You must speak loud, madam,' my friend would say, in-

terposing at such moments. ‘He is very deaf, and can scarcely hear a thunder storm.’

“Retiring one evening to my quarters, in a wayside hut, after a play of this sort, I found myself separated from the bed of some fellow travellers, only by a scanty wooden partition, so slight that, despite my deplorable deafness, I could distinctly hear every word they uttered.

“Now I did not particularly fancy this close neighbourhood, for we had met these men before on our journey, and taken a decided and distrustful aversion to them. Why, I know not, beyond the generally suspicious style of their physiognomies. It was only the day previous, that they had watched me with curious eyes, while I was making a trade for a horse, to supply the place of one I had just lost. I thought then that my well-filled purse was a grateful object of contemplation to them. They had, too, asked a very long blessing at the supper table, which did not reassure me, and scarcely less, the manner in which they kept apart from the rest of the family through the evening.

“Arranging my pillow, I resolved to keep my eyes and ears open for a while, and, if possible, learn a little more of these unknown gentry; a resolve which was not abandoned, when I heard one of them caution the other against talking so loud as to awaken the man in the next room—meaning my watchful self—and the answer, that there was no danger, since I was too deaf to hear even Gabriel’s trumpet.

“Though I could not understand all that was said, since they spoke in a very low key, either from habit, the influence of the silent hour, or an undefined fear, after all, that they might be overheard; yet I picked up enough to assure me that my companion and myself were the subject of their dialogue, and what I did hear was not at all calculated to allay my curiosity.

"They do not seem to be quite sure of the safety of the roads here," said one, "for I have observed that they are so well armed that it would be rather risky to attack them."

"Of course they are armed," said the other, "carrying so much gold about them, as they do. You observed the heavy purse of that handsome looking fellow, when he was paying for his nag yesterday."

"To be sure I did. That's a prize, with all there no doubt is, besides, worth striking for; and these chaps are not much protected by their pistols, though they do make a grand display of them. Any greenhorn, with a sharp eye, might help himself at his pleasure. They would be frightened out of their skins at the first intimation of an attack."

"Did you not say that they take the new road in the morning?"

"Yes: so I heard them tell the landlord."

"Well; that will be convenient for us; and I have no doubt, they will be very glad of our company as they go through the forest, at Murderer's Hollow!"

"At this last remark they both laughed a chuckling, sneering laugh, which went far to confirm my worst suspicions. But all my attention was required by the growing interest of the prolonged, yet disjointed conversation.

"It would be rather venturous to waylay a man on the high road, while so many are abroad on the way to the camp meeting."

"So much the easier to escape in the crowd. I tell you it's the very best time in the world, on that very account."

"Perhaps it is; anyhow, we must be wary how we proceed, for I have some respect yet for my neck."

"Oh! we are safe enough! old stagers like us! We'll get a start of them in the morning, and they'll be up to us by the time we are ready. We'll look after the burial there in

the Hollow as quick as possible, and then get to the meeting as fast as we can, as they will be wondering where we have been.'

"By this time I had heard quite enough to keep awake without much effort; quite too much to sleep; so, quietly slipping from my room, I sought the apartment of my companion, in another part of the cabin, and made him as anxious as myself, with the details of all the diabolic plottery I had discovered.

"The rest of that long night we kept wakeful vigil, discussing our best mode of proceeding through the impending dangers. At first, we bravely determined to follow our original itinerary, and, if needs be, take a brush with the rapsca lions; first, however, examining our pistols, to see that the charges had not been surreptitiously withdrawn. Then we thought of confiding our suspicions to the landlord, whom, we were well satisfied, would be quite as much astonished at the revelation as we ourselves had been.

"Finally, however, it was agreed that the suspected highwaymen should be permitted to start as they proposed, but, that instead of following them, as we were expected to do, we would expose their machinations, and take a sufficient guard with us, to secure them when they made the attack, which we should invite.

"In the discussion of these plans, and in some apprehension of more immediate danger, for we were not quite certain that our worthies would wait until they reached Murderer's Hollow for the execution of their bloody plots, the night passed; and as we opened the shutter to let in the welcome light of the rising sun, we saw our self-elected travelling companions, already in their saddles, and starting for 'Murderer's Hollow!'

"We looked at each other and smiled meaningly, when, at our very matutinal breakfast, our host inquired how we

had passed the night; and the smile deepened, when it was remarked that we had seemingly quite lost our appetite.

"The worthy landlord quickly divined that all was not exactly right; so, the meal over, we poured into his bewildered ears the grand secret of our night's experience, and our scheme for bringing the villains to justice.

"'What!' he cried, at last, when his astonishment permitted him to speak, 'the men who were here last night, robbers, murderers?'

"'As sure as Gospel,' said we.

"'Ha, ha, that's just it,' screamed our host, his surprise giving way to an uncontrollable fit of mirth. 'Gospel! Why they are preachers of the Gospel!'

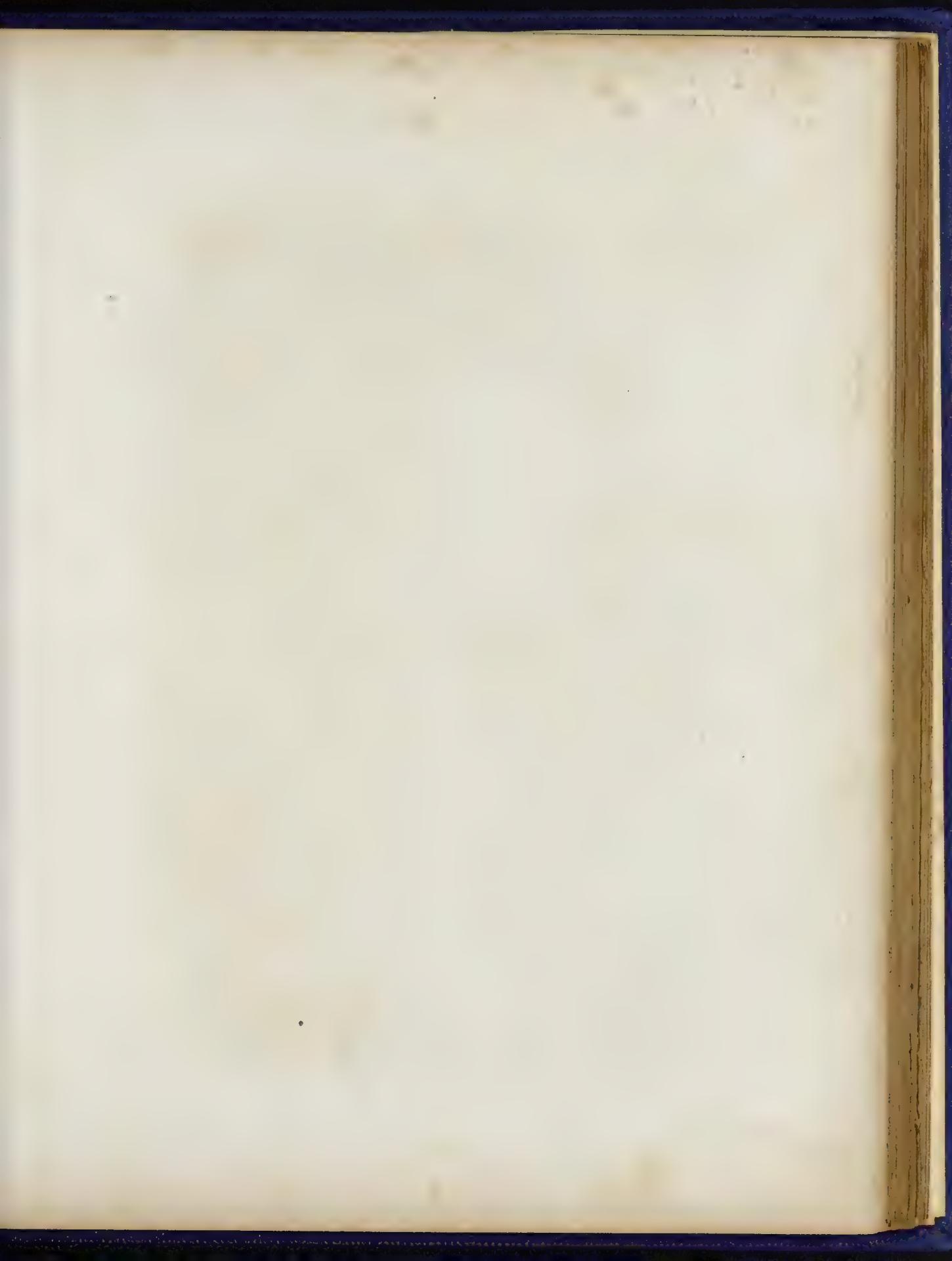
"'Are you sure?' we asked—a lurking suspicion, that we had 'sold' ourselves, forcing its way into our heads. 'And the burial in Murderer's Hollow?'

"Here the host laughed more obstreperously than ever. 'The burial!' he cried, half choking. 'Why, that's Tom Nugent, the old hunter, who died the other day, and is to be put into the ground this morning! These men, you have taken for highwaymen, are the greatest preachers in these parts. They are going to officiate at old Tom's funeral this morning, on their way to the camp meeting at _____. Why, I heard them say that they should be glad to have your company on the journey, especially through Murderer's Hollow, as you seemed to be well-armed, and the road was not so safe as it might be. They said they should go ahead, so that they might attend the funeral and be ready to join you when you came along. Ha, ha, ha!'

"'Ha, ha, ha!' we repeated, but not quite so roysterously as Boniface; for as the women and children, gathering around, had managed to pick up the thread of the story, and now joined heartily in the merriment, we felt sorry that *we* had

not got the start, instead of our highwaymen, and were now in the very deepest and most lonely glen of Murderer's Hollow!

"This annoying adventure cured me of my deafness for a while, and read us a lesson upon the immorality of eavesdropping, which I commend to your most serious reflection."





CHAPTER XI.

MR. DEEPREDDE put on his spectacles, and peered gravely into the map of New York, which we had placed under his erudite nose. "I am afraid, gentlemen," said he, "that out of the abundance of your pleasant memories, you will all speak at once, when I ask you to send back your thoughts to that charming feature of the landscape of the Empire State, its exhaustless lake scenery. The name of these exquisite idyls in the poetry of Nature, in our own State, as in all the northern part of the Union, is legion. 'They lie,' says Willis, 'in the midst of the wild forests, like silver mirrors, tranquil and lovely, mingling a refinement and an elegance with the bold character of the scenery, which contrasts, like Una with the couchant lion.'

"Everywhere, these silver mirrors repeat the picturesque beauties of the New England hills and forests. In the wild solitudes of Maine the noble stag looks fearlessly into the waters of Moosehead, Umbagog, Oquosuck, Moosetucmagantic, and Molechumkea-merek; the names of Winnipissiogee and Squam always bring pleasant recollections of New Hampshire, and equally grateful is the memory of the fairy ponds of western

Connecticut. Beautiful lakes, of every variety of extent and character, are to be found in all parts of New York, while through the northern division, there extends an unbroken chain of them, over a distance of nearly two hundred miles. The finest part of this chain lies among and around the Adirondack hills, and the queen of them all is the particular subject of our consideration to-night—the far-famed Horicon, as the Indians had it, Lake Sacrement according to the French, and, again, in plain English, Lake George."

"The chairman," said Mr. Vermeille, "may very properly speak of fair Horicon as the gem of the lake views, not of our own State alone, but of the Republic. Indeed, I have heard the most intelligent travellers confirm my own opinion, excepting in the subtle charm borrowed from the embellishments of art—the fairy chateaux and crumbling tower—its beauties are not rivalled by any sister scenes in the old world. Here, with your permission, I will turn to a passage in Mr. Willis's 'brief mentions' of American Scenery, which I see upon the table. 'Loch Katrine,' he says, 'at the Trosachs, is a miniature likeness of Lake George. It is the only lake in Europe that has at all the same style and degree of beauty. The small, green islands, with their abrupt shores—the emerald depths of the water, overshadowed and tinted by the tenderest moss and foliage; the lofty mountains in the back-ground, and the tranquil character of the lake, over which the wind is arrested and rendered powerless by the peaks of the hills and the lofty island-summits—are all points of singular resemblance. Loch Katrine can scarce be called picturesque, except at the Trosachs, however; while Lake George, throughout all the mazes of its three hundred and sixty-five islands—there are said to be just this number—preserves the same wild and racy character of beauty. Varying in size from a mile in length to the circumference of a tea-table, these little islands

present the most multiplied changes of surface and aspect—upon some only moss and flowers, upon others a miniature forest, with its outer trees leaning over to the pellucid bosom of the lake, as if drawn downward by the reflection of their own luxuriant beauty.' With one more extract, I will cease my trespass on Mr. Willis's pages. 'The mountains on the shores of this exquisite lake, consist of two great ranges, bordering it from north to south. The western range passes westward of the north-west bay, at the head of which, a vast spur shooting towards the south-east, forms the whole of the peninsula between the bay and the lake. Both these ranges alternately approach the lake, so as to constitute a considerable part of its shores, and recede from it again to the distance, sometimes, of two or three miles. The summits of these mountains are of almost every figure, from the arch to the bold bluff and sharp cone. In some instances, the loftier ones are bold, solemn, and forbidding; in others, they are clothed and crowned with verdure. It is the peculiarity of Lake George, that while all the world agrees to speak only of its loveliness, it is surrounded by features of the highest grandeur and sublimity. The Black Mountain is one of these; and there is every variety of chasm, crag, promontory, and peak, which a painter would require for the noblest composition of mountain scenery.'

"The peninsula mentioned here, as forming the north-west bay, extends southward, within a dozen miles of the head of the lake. This point is very appropriately called the Tongue; and in the angles and interlacings which it makes with the long line of hills on either side, is the most serviceable ingredient in the fine compositions, presented at every step of progress, by water or by land, through the lower part of the lake. Eastward of the Tongue, lies that contracted portion of Horicon called the Narrows, a passage which, seen from Sab-

bath Day Point, at its northern terminus, offers one of the noblest pictures to be found in the whole thirty-six miles of the voyage down the lake."

"While our Horicon," said Mr. Flakewhite, taking up the discourse, "wins admiration by its triple beauty of unrivalled hill, island, and water, it has also, its trio of moral charms, in its highly poetic humour, its social life, and its historic and legendary tales. The scenery of Lake George, under every aspect and every light, cannot fail to delight and quicken the dullest fancy. Its social pleasures, for it is the summer home and haunt of thousands of amiable and intelligent tourists, must soothe and content the most ennuied soul; while the most thoughtful and the most imaginative mind will find abundant matter for reflection and for speculation in its tradition and romance. From one or other of these points of inspiration, some of our improvisators will, I hope, be able to draw for our amusement either song or story."

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Asphaltum, after a pause, "so fruitful a subject as ours, to-night, should not go begging for chroniclers; and, as I cannot lisp in numbers, I will tell you a tale of the heroic period of Horicon—a memento of our particular theme, the shrewd exploits of the brave Major Rogers—which gives name to the scene of our picture, and suggests the baptismal of my story of

The Scent of Horicon; or, Rogers's Slide.

"A century ago, when the French and English colonies of America were contending for the mastery, they made the now peaceful waters of our winsome lake, the scene of their wild and bloody deeds—deeds, which terrible as they were at the

time, now serve to spread a halo of deep historic interest over every wave and island, and hill of the neighbourhood—from the once busy forts of Edward and William Henry, to the far-famed walls of Ticonderoga, now left in a picturesque beauty worthy of older and more storied lands.

"The period of which I speak was one of unwonted activity throughout the length and breadth of the American colonies. The people now no longer solely occupied, as in earlier days, in the protection of their fire-sides against the cruelties of their Indian neighbours, were awakening to the loftier and more extensive spirit of heroism, incident to a united struggle against a powerful foreign foe; that spirit of national individuality and dignity, which henceforward continued to increase and strengthen, until the country broke away from the bondage of foreign rule and became one of the great powers of the earth. At first glance, we are apt to underrate the character of the men of those days, in so homely a garb is it exhibited to us; and yet, it was grander and more eventful than the thought and achievement, which in other days and circumstances, won the applause of solemn senates, and the acclamations of the swarming populace. The deeds of the simple, yet lion-hearted rangers and partizans of the colonial and Revolutionary wars, fill as interesting, if not as sounding a page in the world's history, as those of 'the noblest Roman of them all.' Among these humble, yet memorable names, are those of the indefatigable and fearless Marion, the brave Putnam, the daring Stark, and the gallant Rogers.

"As I was saying, these were stirring days throughout the colonies. Virginia and Carolina had led the van in pushing back the French intruders, and now New York and Massachusetts coming to their aid, the scene of the war was transferred to their territory, and the chief operations centred, henceforth, on Lake George.

"The enemy in the stronghold which they had built at Ticonderoga, were in possession of the great highway between their territory in the Canadas and the possessions of the colonies. The great aim of the colonial operations was to secure this important post, and many and divers-fated were the expeditions sent out for this purpose. Under the nature of the circumstances and situation, the movements of these expeditions were guided solely by the information gathered by the wary and intrepid scouts. The whole country being a wilderness of most difficult access, and swarming with the hidden spies and parties of the enemy, the enterprise of collecting such information was as hazardous as it was of great pith and moment. None but such self-sacrificing patriotism, and such exalted daring as that which animated the souls of our gallant rangers, could have ventured upon the task.

"The journals of these scouts present us with graphic pictures of the nature and risk of their labour, and the brave spirit in which they performed it. Some of these interesting 'reports' are preserved in the pages of the Documentary History of our State, a copy of which I see is in the possession of our worthy host. If he will hand me the fourth volume, I shall be certain to interest you by the reading of an extract or two.

"Here," continued Mr. Asphaltum, turning over the leaves of the tome, which we placed before him, "here is a passage from the journal of our hero, himself, dated Lake George, October 14th, 1755. 'I Embarked,' he writes, 'in a Birch Canoe, at the Camps, on the South End of Lake George, with Four Men beside my self, & sailed twenty-five miles, and Landed on the west side of the Lake, then travelled by Land, and on the Eighteenth Day I arrived on the Mountains on the West side of Crown Point; there I lay that Night, and all the next Day, and observed the Enemy's motions there

and about Crown point, and observed Ambreseers Built upon the Mount, about Thirty Rods To the southwest of Crown point fort; in the Evening went Down to the Houses that was built upon the Lake to the South of Crown point, & went into a barn that was filled with wheat & left three men, & proceeded with one man To make further Discoverys at the fort, and found a good place to Ambush within Sixty Rods of the fort, & Imediately went back and took our partners and ambushed at the proper place we had found, and there we lay Till about Ten of the Clock, & observed several canoes passing up and down the Lake and sundry men that went out To work about the secular affairs, & Judged the whole that was in the fort to be about five Hundred; at length a frenchman Came out of the fort Towards us, without his gun, and Came within fifteen Rods of where we lay; then I with another man Run up to him In order to Captivate him, but he Refused to Take Quarter, so we Killed him and Took off his Scalp in plain sight of the fort, then Run and in plain view about Twenty Rods & made our Escape, the same Night we Came Right west of Tianderago about three Miles and upon a Mountain in plain sight of their fort & see large Incampments Round it & heard a vast number of small arms fired. Judged there to be Two Thousand men at Tianorago; and on the Twenty-first Day Got to our Canoes about Eight of the Clock in the Morning & found all safe, and about Nine of the Clock in the Evening Arrived all well at our Encampment where we set out. The above is the Chief Discovery that we made at Crown Point and Tianargo.'

"In another 'report' to head-quarters, our hero writes, 'Set out with a Party of fifty men with orders to Look into Crown Point and the Advance Batterys that is Built Round it, the first Day we march'd Down the Lake George about Eighteen Miles & Camp'd, so we proceeded by the west'red of

the Greate Mountains And continu'd our March until the 2^d of Febr, and then Clambr'd up a Greate Mountain to the Westrd of Crown Point about one Mile, and gave it the name of Ogden's Mount, there we took a Particular view of the s^d fort and the Redouts that is Built Round it & a Plan of the same, we Laide there untill the Evening then went Down the Mountain, march'd through a small Village About half a mile from the Fort to the Suther^d, there we Laide in Ambush upon each side of the Roade that leads from the Fort through sa^d Village, there we laid Until about nine o'clock in morn^g, and there came along one French man which we took prisoner, & 2 more were upon the Roade a coming towards us, but Discovered our Ambush and made a speedy escape to the fort, and some of my men pursued them within gun Shot of the Fort, but could not overtake them. So we Being Discovered, thought it needless to waite any Longer for Prisoners, but Imediately set fire to the Barns & Houses, where was abundance of Wheat & other grains, & we Kill'd their Cattle, Horses, Hogs, in number about fifty. Left none living in said village to our knowledge, about 11 o'clock we marched Homeward, Leaving the Village on fire the 5th inst.'

"In the rude style and orthography of these journals," continued the narrator, as he ended his reading, "we have a vivid picture of the rugged exterior of the heroism of our country's history—an exterior which carries back our thoughts to the humble and uncultivated, yet dauntless natures of the apostles of our Christian faith.

"It was while on a service such as the extracts which I have read, describe, that our hero met with the famous adventure which I proposed to narrate. Returning over the hills from a weary and hazardous observation of the terrible fortress, his thoughts, as he pushed through the dense forests, were busy with the results of his enterprise—so busy that he not

only failed to notice his near approach to an ambuscade of Indians, but that he unwarily gave expression to the satisfaction of his heart, and called upon himself the observation of the savages, by a loud and hearty laugh.

"'I've got them now, sure as pisen!' said he, in a tone of happy self-felicitation—but at the same instant, he caught a glimpse of his unlooked-for foes—and with a sudden and total change of countenance, but still with a daring insouciance of feeling, natural to him and his vocation, he muttered, '*and now they've got me, true as Gospel!*'

"Hemmed in on all sides, there was, seemingly, no hope for our beleaguered ranger. But his natural valour and wit did not desert him. Without waiting to be captured, he sent up a loud shout for help, and spreading his arms towards his foes, rushed madly into their midst, with an affectation of the confidence and joy of a fugitive finding sanctuary.

"'Quick, quick!' he cried, 'or they'll be upon us!' pointing to some imaginary object in the direction from whence he had come.

"'Where? what?' asked a bewildered Frenchman, who appeared to be in command of the troop.

"'The Yankees!' gasped the fugitive. 'I've give 'em the slip by a miracle! I was coming to you with a message from the fort, when they got hold of me, and stole my papers, the scoundrels! They'd have killed me, sartain, if I hadn't watched my time when they were asleep and done for their infernal Captain—that diabolical Rogers!'

"'Rogers!' exclaimed the party, in one voice, as they gathered round the exhausted rangers. 'Have you killed that rascal?'

"'Yes, yes! I've sent him to Heaven, sure enough! I gave him one dig, and it settled him without a word. He didn't so much as say "thank 'ee," the ungrateful dog! Then

I stripped him, and putting on his nasty rags, coolly passed the sentinels, and ran for my life. When I saw you, I was afeared that I'd fallen into their dastardly hands again, but thank God, I'm safe now, and if we make haste we may meet the imps, and get back the messages——'

"The party were so rejoiced at the capture of their dreaded foe, the redoubtable Rogers, and our hero played his part with such perfect aplomb, that they did not delay to question the truth of his story, but set off in all haste towards the English quarters—the direction indicated by the fugitive, as the whereabouts of his late captors.

"They continued the search eagerly, but without success, until another night brought them to a halt. Fatigued with their extraordinary labours, and assisted by the somnolent effects of a jug of whisky, which our hero adroitly managed to get down their throats, they soon sank into a deeper repose than the imaginary one which had facilitated his fancied escape on the previous night.

"Waiting patiently until the whole party seemed to be either asleep or unobservant of his motions, he quietly stole from the circle, and again breathed freely 'in the wilderness, alone'; but, as his changeful destiny would have it, he was not quite alone; as he suddenly discovered, when he ran rudely against an unlooked-for out-post. In a twinkling, the fugitive snatched the tomahawk from the hand of the astonished sentinel, and buried it in his head, but not with sufficient celerity to prevent his sending up a cry of alarm, which aroused the sleepers to a knowledge of his flight, and to a torturing suspicion of the ruse by which they had been so readily deceived.

"Rogers did not stop to look behind him, knowing that his safety now laid in his legs alone. He had at all times a tolerable degree of confidence in these good friends, which was

now increased by the thought of the fine start he had got of his pursuers, and of the hesitation and delay their surprise would create. Upon the latter advantage, however, he soon found that he could count but little. It was only at intervals that he managed to gain sufficiently upon his foes to lose the sounds of their pursuit. In his eager haste, he for a moment mistook his course, and escape now no longer appeared possible, as he suddenly found himself upon the brow of a huge, mural precipice, overhanging the lake.

"When the enemy caught a glimpse of his position, and of his momentary hesitation, they sent up an unearthly yell of triumph. It was for an instant only, that he stood gazing over the precipice, and as the voices of his foes died away, a smile crossed his lips, as if in pleasure at some odd fancy of his brain.

"'I'll fix the varmints, after all!' he muttered, and coolly reversing his snow shoes in such wise as to lead to the inference that he had slid down the precipice, he slid, instead, quietly off in another direction.

"When the Indians reached the rock, they looked in blank amazement, at finding it unoccupied, and their wonder rose to admiration and awe, when they became conscious of the tremendous feat by which their victim had escaped; and never afterwards did they look upon his face, or hear his name, without a feeling of reverence and fear, as of one under the especial protection of the Great Spirit.

"And from that day to this," said Mr. Asphaltum, ending his narrative, "that famous precipice has been known as Rogers's Slide!"

"And a fitting monument it is," added the chairman, "to the memory of a gallant man."

"Now," said Mr. Brownoker, "I will, if you please, and by way of varying the time, give you a later, and lighter

reminiscence of Lake George. It is not quite so adventurous, or so eventful, as Asphaltum's, being all about a lady's glove, instead of a warrier's hatchet—significant, you perceive, of the present peaceful character of the region, in contrast with its olden days of turmoil and strife."

"Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,
Our stern alarms changed to merry meetings,
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures."

"Exactly, my dear Scumble," continued Mr. Brownoker, after a moment's halt, while he nodded to the worthy Professor, as he thus relieved his mind. "We are now in the drawing-rooms of Horicon, instead of its battle-fields. My story, as I was saying, is all about a glove. Gloves, you know, are among the most romantic and suggestive thoughts in the world. How the young heart beats at the sight of a dainty glove, upon a fair girl's gentle——"

"Oh! that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek"—

"Don't interrupt me, Scumble, with your pitiful verses—fair girl's gentle hand. There is the hawking glove, with its thousand delightful memories of the merry age of falconry; and, now we live over again the wondrous days of chivalry, as we pick up the gauntlet of the fearless knight. Think of those good old times, when a poor devil might legitimately win a sweet kiss, and a pair of gloves into the bargain, from his sleeping lady-love; when gloves had the magic gift of inducing fairy dreams; when the poetical ceremony was in vogue, of blessing the glove at the crowning of the French monarchs; and, when England's kings, on the same occasions, with the casting of a glove, gallantly challenged all the world to dis-





pute their right to their thrones! From the cherothecæ and manicæ of the Romans, down to the present hour, gloves, like modern sentimentalists, have had a history! Even yet, the romance lingers. Gloves are still the most ceremonious and poetic part of our attire; still, as of old, favourite gifts at the bridal, and at the grave. Gloves——”

“We admit all that,” interrupted Mr. Blueblack. “But to leave gloves in the abstract, and to come at once to the individual, and particular glove of your story——”

“Ah, yes! My story of

Diamond Isle; or, The Stray Glove.

“Some summers ago I had been long lost to the sight, if not to the ‘memory dear,’ of my friends, in the beautiful solitudes of Horicon. I had mused away whole months, far removed from the great world, in my quiet studio at the little inn at Bolton, now that fashionable resort, the Mohican House. And a favourite haunt it well deserves to be—for it is the centre of the most picturesque portion of the lake; commanding a hundred happy views of the Tongue, the Narrows, the North-west bay, the islands, and Shelving Rock; and, from the neighbouring elevations, overlooking the whole charming panorama of land and water.

“I had had a glorious time there, ‘all by myself’; but the sweetest sweets grow disagreeable in excess; and after a while, one might weary even of the sun and shade of Eden itself, you know. So I thought, as I was one day lounging homeward, with my sketch-box on my back; and I suddenly resolved to take a peep at a more busy world than that in which I had so long lived. To this end, I determined to mi-

grate, for a season, to that fashionable resort at Caldwell, the Lake House, where I could again have use for my cravat, and once more conscientiously venture upon the extravagance of blacking my boots.

"On regaining my den at the Bolton landing, a carriage was just rolling off towards the very place of my desires; and a hurried glimpse which I caught of a beauteous face protruded for a moment from its window, clinched my purpose to gather up my duds and be off. My plans were by no means changed, upon learning, as I entered my studio, that the fair unknown had in my absence, and by permission of the hostess, amused herself with my portfolios. When a further examination revealed to me a perfumed glove, and that glove of the most petite and most faultless contour, still warm from the fair hand which had, designedly or not, left it among my treasures, I could no longer brook the briefest delay in the hour of my departure, as I instantly prepared for my visit to the Lake House."

At this point, Mr. Brownoker begged his hearers to consider the first chapter finished, and to 'fortify' themselves before the commencement of the second.

"On second thought," he resumed, "after gazing again upon the bald peak of Black Mountain, upon the richly wooded ridges of the Tongue, the palisades of Shelving Rock, and the placid reach of islanded water, which the window of my little studio revealed, I resolved to make only a brief visit, still retaining my cherished sanctum here, as my headquarters. The remembrance of the true delights I had long enjoyed, in communion with ever-constant and unsophisticated Nature, who, as some gentle-minded youth has sweetly observed, 'never did betray the heart that loves her,' proved

much stronger than the seductions of fashion's soulless joys!

"Instead of following the road which skirts the margin of the lake, I thought I would jump into my boat and take another pull among my favourite islands. A charming day was drawing to a close, and the silvery disc of the moon had already taken its place high in heaven, giving sweet promise of a lovely night. Tossing my portfolio and my travelling-sack—furnished only with some spotless linen, and a resplendent pair of patent leathers—into the skiff, my oars were soon moving to the music of my thoughts, as I skimmed the translucent waters.

"The physical exertion of rowing, the beauty of the evening, radiant in the intoxicating atmospheres and hues of a fading summer sun, the ever-changing and ever-charming landscape, familiar, yet always fresh to my eye and heart; the crowd of gay and mad fancies which filled my busy brain, all conspired to induce a feeling of hope and gladness, unwonted even to my always buoyant and happy humour. Simply to live, would have been, at this moment, a sufficient delight; but my soul leaped within me, as it answered to the varied voices of the myriad unseen spirits which filled all the sky, and earth, and water around me. I moralized pleasantly with the setting sun, the brightening moon, and the passing clouds, and then gossiped with that mad-cap flatterer, Echo, in her hidden home among the hills, asking her a thousand absurd questions, to which she made me a thousand obliging replies. I cannot repeat all the nice confidences, and all the bright hopes she gave me touching the fair owner of my precious glove. Suffice it to say, that they were enough to keep my thoughts active and happy—so active and happy, indeed, that the hours fled unperceived, and, to my surprise, I suddenly found myself in the shadow of Diamond Isle, and not far from my place of destination.

"Diamond Isle was one of my favourite haunts, and as I approached, I turned the prow of my skiff, to make it a passing call. Nearing the shore, I was not a little surprised to find a boat drawn up on the beach. No time, however, was left for speculation on this incident, as more startling surprises absorbed my attention. A cry of terror reached my ear, and in an instant afterwards, I beheld, rapidly hastening towards the shore, a sprite-like figure, clad in mystic white. I pushed in with all speed, and springing from my boat, caught the frightened girl in my arms, just as she was sinking to the earth, exhausted and insensible.

"The moonbeams, which had been hitherto obscured by the clouds, now shone out full upon us; and I recognized the features of the fair face which I had seen at the carriage-window, on returning to my inn that afternoon. When she soon after opened her eyes with returning consciousness, her alarm took another form, at finding a stranger by her side, but a few words of explanation and introduction, aided by a mention of the visit she had paid to my sanctum during the day, sufficed to quiet her new fears, and to enable her to relate the cause of her first terror; which turned out to be nothing more serious than the surprise of a sudden encounter with a rattle-snake.

"'I have often met the creatures,' she said, as a smile rose to my lips, 'without any sense of fear or aversion, and I cannot imagine what may have possessed me to act so ridiculously at this time.'

"In reply to my wonder at finding her thus alone in such an odd place, and at this strange hour, she told me that in obedience to an impulse, which often seized her, to commune with Nature in her solitary haunts, she had stolen away from the circle of merry-makers in-doors, and, as her eye wandered over the beauties of the placid waters and the sleeping islands, she could not resist the temptation to enter her skiff, and had,

unthinkingly, extended her ramble far beyond her first purpose.

"'Though,' she continued, 'I frequently venture on bolder, and more unreasonable exploits, than a lonely visit, by moonlight, to Diamond Isle. In my short life, I have passed through so many scenes of danger, that all sorts of adventure have now, to my fancy, a species of fascination, like that which impels one to gaze at the serpent, or to dash headlong from the brow of a precipice.'

"'Certainly a strange love,' I answered, 'for a young and dainty girl! Perhaps you will tell me of some of the hair-breadth 'scapes of which you speak.'

"'Willingly,' she said, seating herself in the stern of my boat, and adjusting the rudder, while I threw out my oars, and pushed once more for the Lake House—pulling her own, now empty, skiff in our wake—'willingly, but as our time will not suffice for more than one recital, it shall be of an incident which happened to me in this very region, during a visit a few years since. One bright morning, I joined a merry party in an excursion to the forest-glens of the Tongue Mountain. In the course of the day, we managed, in the following of our several humours, to get widely separated, some pursuing one object, and some another. My own cavalier, a devoted lover of the chase, catching a glimpse of a passing deer, forgot his gallantry, and leaving me alone, started off in pursuit. Wearied by his protracted absence, and by the many exercises and excitements of the day, I established myself, lazily, under the arms of a brave old hemlock, and soon fell asleep. When I opened my eyes, after a refreshing nap, a savage creature, which I afterwards learned was a panther, glared ferociously upon me from a bough of the very tree under which I was lying.'

"Here I interrupted the brave girl, with a smiling remark.

touching the appellation of ‘painter,’ by which these animals were vulgarly known.

“Glancing with a look of arch understanding and flattering confidence from my portfolio, which lay in her lap, to myself, she resumed, ‘my first impulse was to shriek for aid, but I immediately remembered to have heard that the wild beast never attacks its prey while sleeping, and I reclosed my eyes, scarcely daring to respire, so intense was my fright. I remained thus, motionless, breathless, and terror-stricken, for an hour—it seemed to me a year—without venturing to look up, excepting only once, and then I again encountered the frightful stare of the panther. At length, to my inexpressible delight, I heard the voice of my truant companion, calling my name, as he came nearer and nearer. But I felt it impossible to answer, and a new horror seized upon me when I thought of the risk to which he was himself exposed. My agony was too much, and I was upon the point of warning him of his danger, at the sacrifice, as I felt, of my own life, when the report of a gun startled me, and a heavy object seemed to fall at my feet, while the woods echoed with a shriek which completely upset my frightened senses.

“‘When my consciousness returned, it needed but a glance to explain the happy circumstances of my escape from the terrible death, which, but a moment before, had seemed inevitable. My companion at my side, and the slain panther at my feet, told their own story, as well as he himself afterwards related it: how, failing in his chase for the deer, he had hastened back, and seeing me motionless upon the ground, and the forest monster watching me from above, he had thought me slain, and with the quick, unerring aim of desperate vengeance, had brought him to the earth. Never shall I forget that terrible day!’ said the lady, as she finished this very agreeable little narrative.

"By this time we were approaching the hotel, and my heroine intimating a wish to re-enter unobserved, flitted from my boat and my sight, leaving me to make my débüt in the usual mundane manner.

"After the necessary repairs in the matter of toilet and table, I ventured to peep into the drawing rooms, where, among a large and gay assemblage, I greeted more than one old friend or city acquaintance. But, as I was not exactly in the vein for a sly flirtation by the light of a chandelier, and more especially, perhaps, as my unknown heroine did not make her reappearance, I again started out in the moonlight, to talk with my own quickly beating heart.

"So many thick coming hopes and fears agitated me, that the whole night fled in wakefulness; and, wearied with vain efforts to sleep, the early morning sun found me again a restless wanderer on the hill-sides.

"Now thought I, as I returned to breakfast; I shall again see those fatal eyes which have so disturbed my wonted careless and contented thoughts. But the eyes came not, and mine host's famous trout went away untouched. The dinner now passed, and my hopes with it. Again the ball room was filled with sparkling eyes, and lovely forms and faces—so they told me—for I could see nothing, the light of my soul being still absent. My case was growing desperate, and I even caught myself thinking, as I looked abstractedly into the clear waters of the lake, how sweet it would be, to lie quietly within their peaceful lethean embrace.

"Then came cruel thoughts, that my beauteous Dian had left all memory of me in my boat, as she stepped out; and again a fear seized me that she might be ill, while I was making no kind inquiry, and proffering no tender sympathy—and with these speculations it occurred to me, for the first time, to question my host.

"Great was my vexation to learn, only, that she had left the hotel, and gone in the steamer down the lake while I was strolling disconsolately through the woods in the morning—at least, so my landlord supposed, for my description of the lady did not quite enable him to identify her. A dozen such ladies he said—as if the world was blessed with more than one—had gone off that day.

"'And did she leave me no message?' I asked, more in sorrow than in anger.

"'Who?' said the Commodore, looking at me, with a provokingly suspicious smile.

"'Ah! how could she?' I muttered to myself, 'not knowing my name! What a deuced fool I am to be sure!'

"'My dear Brownoker,' said the Commodore, 'I do not wish to steal your confidence, but permit me, as a friend, to ask whether you are drunk, or in love.'

"'In love!' I ejaculated, now, for the first time, fully realizing the nature of my complaint, and remembering all the malicious looks and hints thrown at me, throughout the day, by my many friends. In love! no; but you, must be mad.'

"'Ha! ha! ha!' bellowed the Commodore as I rushed away. 'That's a good joke! We must inquire into this mystery.'

"Without awaiting the result of my host's inquiry, I stepped into the office, settled my bill, jumped again into my boat, re-passed Diamond Isle with a sigh, and never ceased tugging at the oar, until I had regained my quarters at Bolton.

"It was near midnight as I re-entered the inn, and the inmates had retired, excepting only a few old veterans who were discussing a protracted tipple. They gave me a greeting, but were much surprised at my speedy return, particularly those

who were aware of my desire to improve my acquaintance with my unknown visitor.

"In answer to the general demands for the incidents of my tour, I related the history of my encounter with the incognita, in the white-robed lady of Diamond Isle.

"'I never,' said one old toper, 'suffer any of my gals to stir about in that way. Out of fourteen, I never had one who—'

"Interrupting my hearer's domestic memoirs, I narrated the adventures of the panther, in which every one suddenly took unusual interest, exchanging, as I proceeded, very significant and mysterious looks.

"'Very remarkable,' muttered the father of a family introduced a few sentences back; 'very remarkable! When the carriage passed yesterday, I thought I had seen her before, somewhere or other; and it must have been here, for I have never been anywhere else.'

"I was about to inquire what they knew of her, and her history, when my landlord added :

"'I thought, too, I'd seen the gal before; but I disremember'd who she was. That affair of the panther made a great stir when it happen'd, and we have always kind o' wanted to know what became of the lady, and if she married.'

"'Married!' I exclaimed; 'Oh, no; not she!'

"'Why, it *was* said,' continued mine host, 'that she afterwards became the wife of the gentleman who saved her life.'

"This very reasonable idea which had never before occurred to my blinded perceptions, completely put to flight all my dawning hopes, and I hastened to avoid any further discussion of the subject by pleading fatigue, and seeking my too long neglected pillow.

"The unpleasant suspicions, which I soon learned had been aroused in the minds of the good people of Bolton, no less than among my friends at the Lake House, by my late

aberations of mind, induced me to break up my camp, and continue my further explorations of the Lake.

"I came to this determination the more promptly, that I had found, on my return, an invitation to a ball, a few evenings hence, at Gurfield's, near Sabbath Day Point, the very place which I next proposed to visit. The card came through a valued friend of other days, whom I had lost sight of for several years, but who had in some way kept better track of me.

"Bidding a final adieu to my friends at Bolton, I proceeded leisurely, on foot, over the mountains to Sabbath Day Point, arriving at the hotel, on the very evening of the promised merry-making.

"It was not long before I greeted my old friend, and recounted with him the adventures of the long years, that had passed since we had laughed together.

"'And so, Harry,' I exclaimed, quite forgetful of my late meditated recusancy, 'you have, like myself, the happy fortune to escape all Cupid's snares, and are still a joyous, hearty bachelor! Aye, my boy?'

"'Bachelor! devil a bit of it, my old friend! I've re-canted. I have abjured all those infamous heresies, and have become the luckiest Benedict alive!'

"'Gracious heavens!' I ejaculated, with a long-drawn sigh of intense commiseration. 'Tell me, Harry, how it all happened, and if the earnest sympathies of a true friend will—'

"'Sympathies! ha, ha! That's a capital joke—capital; but I see, poor, deluded sinner, that you are yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity! Your rambles about Horicon have not been so fruitful as have mine. All my good fortune has been fished from these waters, or quarried in the hills. When I had the happiness to bring down that blessed panther, and save my Ella's life, I struck a vein which—'

"'Oh, ye gods!' I exclaimed, as the fatal truth burst upon my mind. 'Panther! Ella! and were *you*, Harry, the hero of that memorable incident; and is *she*—your wife?"

"'To be sure! She is'n't any thing else! Come, let us go and join the ladies, and you shall become better acquainted with Ella; for you must know that she has already met you, and has taken a great fancy to you. You remember the lady who visited your studio at Bolton, and whom you encountered so romantically, the same night, on Diamond Isle?'

"'The fact is, Harry,' I replied, in a faint, sad voice; 'the fact is I am terribly fatigued by my walk to-day, and only came over to see you for a moment, and make my apologies for the necessity under which I find myself, of hastening on to Ticonderoga, and thence to the city.'

"'Nonsense! nonsense! Ella would never forgive you!'

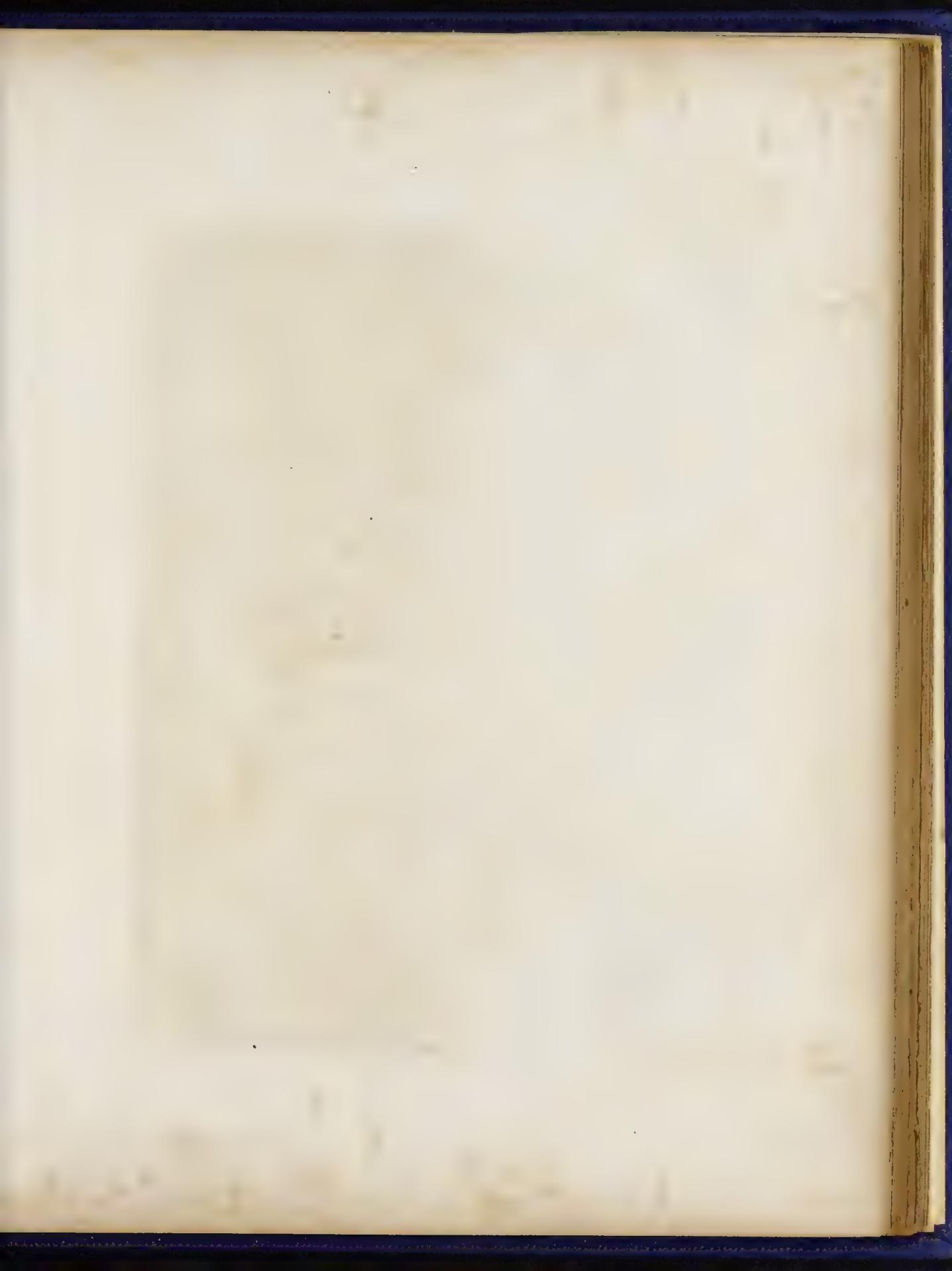
"'Make my compliments to her,' I cried, tearing myself away, and flying back to the domicil in which I had taken up my abode; 'I shall meet you soon in town; you know my address—*au revoir*.'

"Before I slept that night, I addressed my treasured glove, under an envelope, to 'Mrs. Henry B——,' at Gurfield's Hotel, and, at daybreak, was en route for home!"

When our friends had sufficiently complimented Mr. Brownoker upon his affecting story, we were malicious enough to hint, that his adventure seemed to be grounded upon incidents we had ourself once told; to which accusation he slyly pleaded guilty, but justified, first upon the ground of eminent and multiplied precedent. "Shakspeare, himself, you remember, was free enough in borrowing suggestions from others; and secondly," he continued, "the tale seemed to me deserving of a more permanent record than you had already given it, and that

there could not be such better record than in your own pages."

In consideration of Mr. Brownoker's last flattering excuse, we forgave him for "stealing our thunder," and promised to enter the story on our minutes. And with this understanding the meeting adjourned.





CHAPTER XII.

"THE Gothamite," said Mr. Deepredde, "who for the first time runs up from the thronged walks of Broadway, to the almost unbroken wilderness of northern New York, is astonished that Nature should yet remain in such primitive solitude and grandeur, so near the crowded marts of commerce and the ceaseless hum of human life and enterprise. The mountain steeps seem strange to his Russ-pavement vision, and the bounding deer, or the screaming panther are droll, fellow-passengers for him to jostle."

"How is it," inquired Mr. Megilp, "that so vast a territory as the wilderness stretching from Champlain, westward along all the shore of Ontario, should still remain unoccupied?"

"Chiefly," returned Mr. Deepredde, "from the fact that its rude mountainous character makes it unfit for very profitable agricultural uses. Its rich mineral stores, however, have been turned to good account; especially the fine iron ore of that quarter distinctively known as the Adirondack. Here, very extensive works have been for a long time in successful operation."

"Portions of these lands," added Mr. Brownoker, "have

been presented at different times as free gifts, to the negroes, by the philanthropist Gerritt Smith. The benefactions, however, have in most cases been unappreciated, or, at least, unimproved. Be it through the natural laziness of the African, or from the incapacity of the situation and soil, none of the settlers have long held their possessions. One of these indomitable fellows, it is said, pronounced Mr. Smith's land so poor, 'dat de grass-hopper had to go down on he knees to smell de clover!' Cuffee, however, is every where, and by nature so indolent, so wanting in enterprise, and even in desire, that it is a question whether he would be able to raise a mullen in Paradise."

"I do not know though," said Mr. Asphaltum, "that we should lament the loneliness of the region. It is at present a noble field for the health-giving and soul-cheering recreations of the angle and the chase; and in the progress of time, the shores of its countless beautiful lakes will become the most delightful of all summer resorts for our invalid and pleasure-seeking population."

"For some time to come," said Mr. Blueblack, "the Adirondack region must be left to the Nimrods; at least, until the floods of commerce shall sweep through the frowning mountain gorges, and the means of locomotion be greatly increased. Very few ladies will venture there at present. The paths are too rude and too narrow for the passage of the trailing robes and flowing skirts of fashion. What can our drawing-room belles do in a country which can be traversed only on foot, or in boats, which must every now and then be borne across the portages that continually break the chain of lakes; and which must always confine their wardrobes to the narrow limits of a carpet-bag or a knapsack; and where, too, the paths, when such blessings are to be found at all, are over jagged rocks, lost in the débris of the woods, or leading one often through

the treacherous bogs of a beaver meadow? And yet some brave women I have met here, roughing it with the stoutest, under canvass tent, and over rocky ways, and without any abatement of lady-like grace and elegance. One of these true women was once rowing with her husband down the merry current of the Saranac, when they suddenly encountered a monstrous bear; to proceed was scarcely possible, since the animal barred the passage, while to return was quite as impracticable, for some rapids in the way, which they had just gallantly descended, were not to be re-traversed so quickly and easily. As monsieur was nervously manœuvring to dodge the beast, madame coolly seized the gun and despatching a ball at his ugly head, brought him down upon them with the added fury of hunger and passion. A terrible struggle followed, in which the lady laid about her bravely with the stock of her musket, and monsieur greatly damaged his oars. Exhausted at length by the bleeding from the wound made by madame's shot, and the persistent battery which followed, the animal fell heavily against the boat, cooling the heated brows of his captors in the startled waters."

"Blueblack's anecdote reminds me," said Mr. Megilp, "of an adventurous ramble I once made through the Great Indian Pass. While crossing one of the many doublings of the Ausalle, which rises hereabouts, I was startled on seeing, through the thick intervening bushes, the terrible eyes of a wild-cat, fixed glaringly upon me. In my alarm—for I must confess I was, at first, a little frightened—I was about to raise my gun, but as the creature seemed to move, I desisted, fearing to exasperate it. For a long, long time—God knows how long—I stood tremblingly gazing at the fixed eyes of the monster, while it still looked as unmovingly at me. My heart all the while was in my mouth. As I thus watched, hour after hour dragging slowly by, I thought my time was come,

and said my prayers with unction. All my sins rose up before me. I thought of all the evil paths into which my friends here had led me, and more particularly did I repent me of certain unpardonable peccadilloes into which I had been tempted by Brownoker. Fatigue and hunger came upon me, the day waned, and darkness—the black darkness of the forest—approached. I could bear it no longer, and was fairly sinking with exhaustion, when the animal again moved as if to spring, and lifting my piece, I blazed away in desperation, and the next minute he fell at my feet. As soon as I dared, I proceeded to examine my conquered foe, and to my astonishment, large as he had seemed to me, glaring down from his perch, I found him to measure, from the head to the tip of the tail, no less than fifteen——”

“ Whew!” cried Brownoker, whose eyes had been dancing with merriment, during this exciting recital, “ Stop where you are, Megilp, lest when your time does come, it be a ‘time, indeed.’ Gentlemen, I heard the whole of this tremendous adventure from the lips of an old hunter in the Adirondacks, who informed me, in confidence, that the terrible panther which Megilp brought down after a whole day’s parley was, simply, a mass of swinging *débris*: bark, moss, and fungi, into which some scraps of glittering mica, which he mistook for savage eyes, had been blown by the wind.”

“ But my dear Brownoker, you see—”

“ No use, my good fellow! Confess, and throw yourself upon the mercy of the court! When released from his durance of mortal fear, our poor friend could no longer find his way home in the darkness, and he was compelled to listen all night, cold and supperless, to the dainty serenade of the wolves! Don’t say a word Megilp, or I shall remember the cigars which you picked up at Gilsey’s, when we were once lounging down Broadway, and which you, meeting me some hours af-

terwards, offered to me as extraordinary Havannas, given you by your particular friend, Don José Calderon de la Humbugios, just arrived from the Antilles!"

Megilp, solemnly insisted upon the truth of his story, and the gross malice of Brownoker, but not successfully enough to stay the general laugh at the unlooked-for dénouement.

"Blueblack is right," said Vermeille, "in leaving our northern wilderness, for many years to come, to the uses of the sportsmen. And great, indeed, are its capabilities in this wise. Rowing through the thousand little lakes here, often have we pulled up to lunch on some inviting island shore, when our guide has suggested to us the propriety of raking up material for a fire, while he should throw in his line, and take a few trout; and seldom was it that some half dozen of the sparkling gentry were not spread upon our primitive griddle of forked twigs, quite as soon as the fire was ready to receive them. I have seldom ventured out for a stroll without crossing the path of a deer. And with good dogs, a successful morning's sport is always to be had. On Tupper's Lake, one of the most picturesque of the Saranac group, a party of hunters took, recently, no less than twenty-nine deer and one moose in a period of eight consecutive days. A veteran angler from old Scotia, accustomed to fishing in the ancient reflective Izaak Walton fashion, went off from this neighbourhood in high disgust at the superabundance of the fish. He was too deeply penetrated with a sense of the dignity and difficulty of his art, to see it, like French, Spanish, Italian, and other once serious studies, 'made easy' at that rate.

"The people here, support themselves by hunting, and by the fees they receive as guides to amateur Nimrods. Their usual charge, where the visitor keeps such game as may be caught, is from two to three dollars a day, for boat, guide, and dogs—the guide rowing, hunting, cooking, carrying the boat

across the portages, and making himself generally useful as man of all work. You may accompany the hunters, simply to witness the sport, or even to assist therein, without price, they finding their account in the moderate charge they will make you for board in their little inns and cabins. Accompanied by a friend, I once made a cruise of some weeks on the Saranac lakes. We furnished our own provisions, while the guide supplied boat, baggage, tents, and utensils, dogs and ammunition, and for his manifold services received from us two dollars per day.

"These guides, who are hearty honest fellows, most often, of strong individuality of character, like to serve a clever and intelligent employer, but your *gauche* cockney excites their ire. I heard many stories while among them, of a certain sporting person who went into the region, originally, to save souls, but very soon found it much more amusing to kill deer.

"Uncle Moore, as he was familiarly known among his mountain parishioners, was a mighty and inexorable hunter. He went it unceasingly, from night to morn, from morn to dewy eve. It was not his unwearying enthusiasm which offended the guides, but his utter want of the true genial spirit of the chase. He had no love or consideration whatever for the poor victims. He would simply slaughter them, when he could, by hecatombs, and merely preserving the skins as trophies, leave them to rot at leisure. This wholesale and useless destruction was forever exposing him to the blessings of the guides. They were always glad of an opportunity to mar his plans and destroy his sport. When his piece was poised, they would manage unobserved to frighten away the game; or they would mislead him into fields, as barren of deer as they were toilsome of access.

"No opportunity of annoying or quizzing old Uncle Moore was suffered to pass unimproved. On one unpropitious occa-

sion he must perforce go forth on a night hunt. The sky was threatening, and no sooner was the boat pushed off, than a settled and persisting rain set in. After a fruitless pursuit for some hours, during which time they were well soaked, and the boat well lined with water, they neared an island shore, and the guide suggested the propriety of running in and lying by for better weather.

"'O, no!' said the invincible dominie. 'I guess we had better keep on! It's only a shower, and we shall scare up something soon!'

"The guide was silent, then, as through another hour, during which time the storm had increased, and the navigation was becoming as perilous, as it had long been uncomfortable. Uncle Moore was evidently getting tired of his bargain, and he looked from the black sky to the dim shore occasionally, as though he knew which of the two he would prefer, if he were asked. But the guide pulled on, and did not ask him. He saw Uncle Moore's uneasiness, and he maliciously resolved not to come to his aid; on the contrary, he was careful to approach, continually, within tempting distance of the shore, and then pull directly away. At last, the parson's valour was exhausted, and when the boat again neared the land, he remarked, obligingly:—

"'Well, Bill, as you were saying, the weather does look rather bad, and, on second thought, I am not certain that it would not be best for us, as you suggest, to lie by awhile.'

"'Aye!' said Bill, looking up distractedly from his musings. 'What did you say, Uncle Moore?'

"'I was observing,' reiterated the afflicted dominie, 'that I think it is possible you may be in the right about holding up a—'

"'O dear, no, Uncle Moore,' said Bill, in a tone of astonishment. 'We musn't think of such a thing! Lie by! nonsense!'

Why you know it's only a shower, and we shall be sure to scare up something soon!"

"'Scare up our death-a-cold!' muttered the martyred parson, too proud to take the responsibility of backing-out upon his own shoulders.

"And again, and again, the boatman presented a Tantalus' cup to the dominie's lips, in a hasty glimpse of the shore. Round and about, like the craft of the ancient mariner, went the phantom boat all that weary night, until at last, they scared up daylight and sunshine, and the exhausted parson was allowed to step ashore.

"'I was determined,' said the guide to me, as he finished his story, 'that the old fellow should enjoy his shower!'"

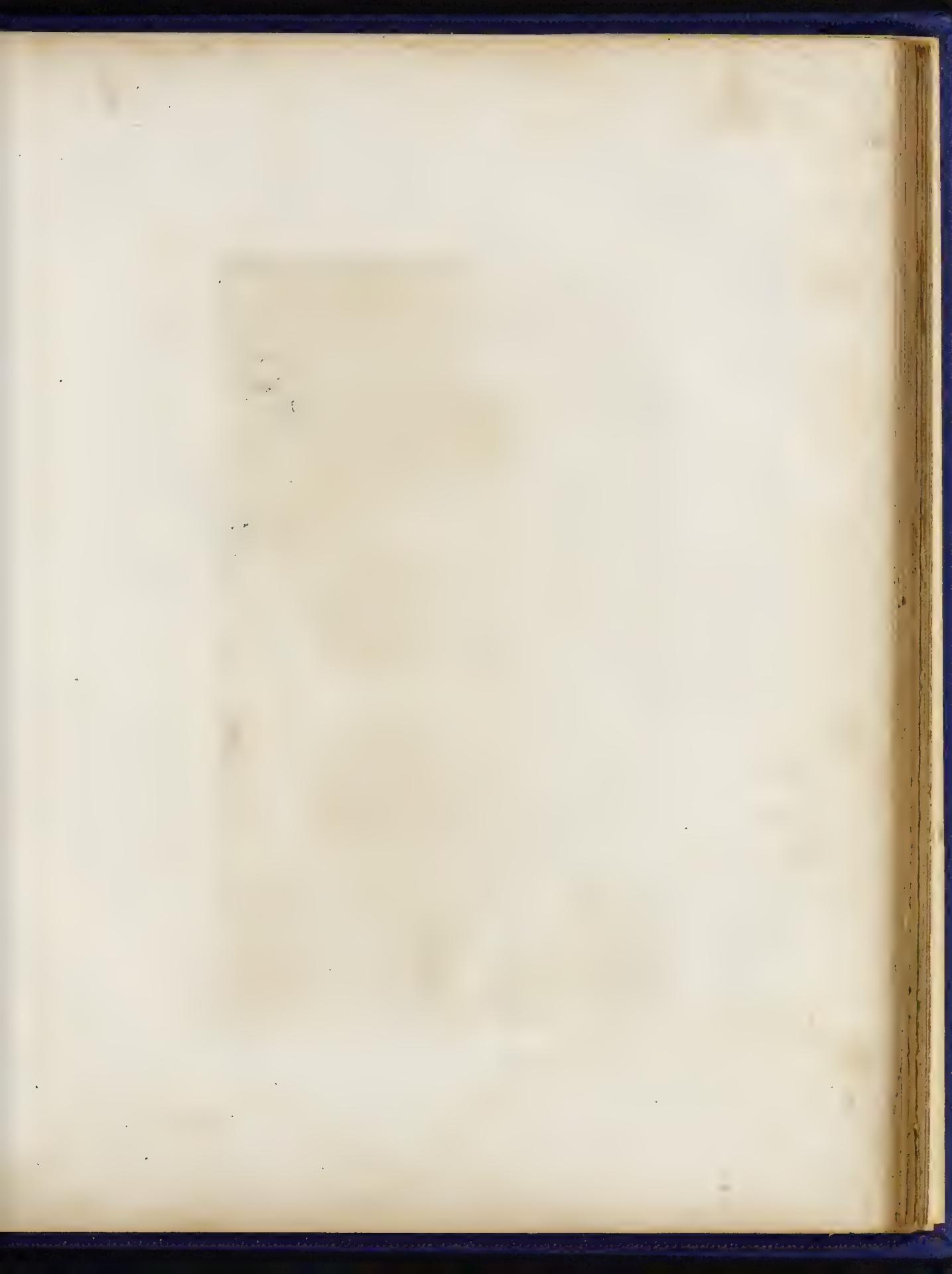
"Vermeille's reminiscences of the Saranac, remind me," said Mr. Brownoker, "of a devil of a tramp I once had with a friend thence through the woods to the Adirondack. By the rough route we followed, the distance to the Iron Works was but twenty-five miles, whereas the dry beaten path would have taken us back again to our starting point on Lake Champlain, and led us a roundabout journey of a hundred miles. The passage through the forest was deemed scarcely practicable, but shouldering our knapsacks, we ventured upon it. It so happened, unfortunately, that the usual difficulties of the way were at the moment greatly increased by the late heavy rains, which had fearfully swollen the brooks and destroyed the footing. Our first day's march, passed off well enough, leading as it did for the most part, over a tolerably beaten trail. We brought up for the night, at the cabin of an intelligent settler, in a pleasant valley, bravely sentinelled at all points by the chief veterans of the Adirondacks and their allies. Here, was again seen the grotesque outline of the Crotchet Mountain, which had formed so prominent a feature in all our pictures on the Saranac lakes. Yonder shone the bald pate of the White Face, and farther

removed, and prouder than all, rose the 'sky-piercing' cone of the renowned Tahanous. As we retired for the night, the weather was still extremely threatening, and so, too, when we arose the next morning, but to accomplish the long day's work it was necessary that we should start too early to learn the doubtful purpose of the clouds towards us. At day-break, our host put us upon the trail, bidding us to follow the opening in the forest, which had been made years before in the construction of a winter road. As this path was only intended for use when deep snows buried the ground, the stumps had been suffered to remain in such wise that it was hardly more passable, at this season, than the untouched woods. The undergrowth, too, had encroached so much, as to continually obscure the clearing. The way leading along the base of the hills, and by the brook-sides, carried us everywhere through deep swamps. We were soon wet through from battling with the dripping bushes, without the further aid of a dense and dreary Scotch mist, which soon came on, and grew heavier and darker through all the endless day. At first we stepped over the crowded puddles with careful daintiness; after the passage of half a mile, however, we were quite content to sink in the mire no deeper than our ankles, and, when a mile had passed away, we cried 'Eureka,' at an occasional glimpse of our boot-tops. It was a weary way, and toilsome. The miles seemed magnified to leagues, and tired, as we soon grew, we were yet too much soaked and chilled to stop for rest. We kept up our sinking spirits by mutual raillery upon our woe-begone appearance, and by now and then—when the rain-drops slackened—caricaturing each other in our sketch-books. Our host had warned us, that near the middle of our march we should bring up on the shore of some lakes, around which no road had been cut, as they have crossed always on the ice. To circumnavigate their intervening waters, we, of course,

blunderingly took the wrong side. Fearful that night would come upon us, before our journey should be ended, we dashed on, manfully, over rock and fallen tree, occasionally following a trail, which after a couple of hours' struggle, conducted us to a ruined bark shanty, on the shore of the lake, provokingly near the point from which we had started. Here we feared we should be compelled to pass the night: no very charming prospect in our total want of provisions, with no means of kindling a fire, and with no arms to defend ourselves against the wolves, with which we knew the woods were filled. Looking out forlornly upon the troubled waters, doubly ghastly at this twilight hour, amid the sad drapery of the storm, we at last, as good luck would have it, espied a solitary fisherman in the dim distance. My companion made the woods echo with his shouts, but his voice was drowned in the wailing of the winds. I came to the rescue with an unearthly yell, which startled the woods, themselves, no less than it electrified my friend. 'That's the thing,' he cried, delighted at the effect; 'do that again, I can't: it will fetch him to a fraction;' and 'fetch him,' it very happily did. He turned out to be an inhabitant of the settlement, come forth for a day's troutting. We soon explained our dilemma, and secured his services to conduct us to our destination.

"'You never could have got 'round on that side in the world,' said he, as we told him of our efforts to regain the path, on the opposite side of the ponds. 'Just a little ways beyond, you would have come to some rocks a hundred feet right "upendicular," which you wouldn't have circumvented in a month.'

"Taking passage in the ricketty canoe, we passed the lakes, and arrived, with the darkness, at the little settlement at the Iron Works, where we speedily hung ourselves to dry by the grateful fires of the rambling inn—a wretched place enough,





but to us a palace at that moment. In the satisfaction of our hearts, we liberally rewarded our Charon, mentally repeating the verses,

Take oh boatman, thrice thy fee,
Take, I give it willingly ;
For, invisibly to thee,
Spirits, twain, have crossed with me.

Spirits of renewed life and hope, which grew and brightened with the pleasures of our subsequent rambles in the vicinage; for the Iron Works is the centre of that wide area of the picturesque, famous under the name of the Adirondacks. In close proximity on each side of this little social oasis in the wilderness, are the beautiful lakes Henderson and Sandford. The shores of these waters are everywhere bold and picturesque in outline, commanding admirable views of all the principal mountains, and affording many varied glimpses of the great walls of the Indian Pass. The soaring crown of Tahanous, or Mount Marcy as it is sometimes vulgarly called, we reached from this centre. Near by, also, is Cheny's Lake, named in honour of the famous hunter, of whom Headley and Lanman have given us so many agreeable stories; and Avalanche Lake, a darksome pool, into which Mount Colden has rudely put his foot.

"But to review all the points of interest here, would steal the hours which some of us can, no doubt, occupy more agreeably with other recital. If I remember aright, I once heard Asphaltum winning the love of a fair circle with some story, true or fanciful, no matter which, about an old solitaire he encountered among these hills."

"By all means," said Mr. Deepredde, "let us hear the experience of Asphaltum. The solitudes of the Adirondacks are just the scenes for such a dismal yarn as he would spin."

"As the chairman desires to say," observed Mr. Asphaltum, "the spirit of our wildernesses is not much in accord with flippant chat or gay adventure, and yet its voice is grateful to the ear which can hear. If it pleases you, I will recall what I can, of my recollections of

The Hermit of the Adirondacks.

"The stranger will do well not to venture alone into the intricate forests of the Adirondacks. Once lost in the pathless woods, he is beyond the help of the town crier. Even the genius of Vidocq would fail to discover him.

"It was my ill-fortune, on my first arrival here, to find the few professed guides pre-engaged, and the rest of the good folks too much occupied, by their own affairs, to accompany me very often in my wanderings.

"'If,' said the honest mountaineer with whom I had taken up my quarters, 'If you could only get the doctor, now, to go along—but its no use talking about that—though, to be sure, he does sometimes take a sort o' liking to painting and wrting people like you—but it don't often happen.'

"'Who is this doctor?' I asked, with no little curiosity, having already, during my brief residence on the mountains, often heard his name vaguely mentioned.

"'He hasn't lived here long,' continued my host, not heeding my question, 'but there's not a man among us knows the woods as he does. He seems to be at home, like, in the mountains—they're sort o' brothers and sisters to him, and yet he wasn't raised among 'em. They say he is from the cities, and knows more than all the fine people that comes here put together.'

"And why cannot I get his help, if he's not otherwise engaged?"

"O, bless you! he isn't a guide, though he sometimes goes out with folks when he takes a fancy to 'em. He just lives to suit himself, sometimes in the woods, or all alone with that old negro he brought with him, who's just as mum as his master; and that's mum enough, for he never says a word about himself, and never has anything to do with anybody, more than he can help, except when folks is sick or in trouble, and then he's sure to be on hand, and a kinder-hearted man at such times, or a better doctor, I never seed or read on."

"Ah! he's a physician, then?"

"Well, I can't tell what he was afore he came here, but, as I was saying, he knows pretty much everything; and folks don't stay sick long after he comes."

"Ah," I said to myself, discovering a mare's nest, "he asks no fee?"

"He soon sets 'em up, and then flies off, and we don't see anything more of him 'till trouble comes again."

This, and subsequent conversations with my host, and others, about their eccentric neighbour, 'the doctor,' as he was simply called, aroused my curiosity, and won my interest—the first, when I supposed him to be some soured old misanthrope, whom the world loved not, because he had never loved the world; and the second, as the genuine, if not genial regard for his fellows, displayed in his sympathy with their afflictions, if not with their joys, led me to picture him to my heart, as a noble and delicate nature, which the winds of adversity had visited too roughly: a nature bowed down and hallowed by the too heavy pressure of sorrow.

That it was not simply a passion for the pleasures of forest life, but rather the remembrance of some hidden grief, which had brought and kept him here, was sufficiently evi-

denced by his solitary existence, his habitually grave mood, and his careful avoidance of all society in its light and happy hours.

"My desire to learn more of the unknown, was only increased by the utter failure of all my efforts to make his acquaintance. At length, accident served me, where my wit had been unsuccessful. A cold, which I had caught through unwise exposure to the mountain storms, ended in a violent fever, and long days of delirium; and the first object which my eyes rested upon, when I awoke to consciousness, was a strange face, so earnest and thoughtful in its character, so expressive in all its lineaments, so peculiar in its strong individuality, so exactly, indeed, in everything, except in its youthfulness, the face which my fancy had painted as that of the mysterious doctor, that I felt sure it could be none but he, who was bending over me with such deep and grave interest.

"I had been long disposed to like him, and now, gratefully remembering the service he had just rendered me, I pressed his hand with all my feeble strength.

"'Ah!' said he, coldly, and hastily withdrawing from the bed. 'He will do well enough now, without my further care. Give him the medicine as I have directed, and if he should not continue to improve, let me know,' and the doctor vanished.

"This chilling rejection of my friendly advances did not grieve me, as it would have done, had I not known something of the doctor's humour; and, I was still further consoled, on learning afterwards, that he called, at intervals, to ask after my health, and occasionally visited me in my sleeping moments.

"As my health returned, I resumed my explorations of the mountains—the more indefatigably, in the hope of encoun-

tering the doctor, who, I well knew, spent most of his time out of doors, hunting, fishing, sketching, or in lonely musings. My cherished object was gradually gained. Here, and there, in the wildest glens and hill-tops, I occasionally came upon the solitaire. From the exchange of simple and brief civilities, these interviews grew into continued conversations, and, at last, they reached an intimacy which brought us continually together.

"The simple curiosity which had first prompted me to search the causes which led the exile into a mode of life, so unsuited to his talents and prospects, changed into a worthier and more earnest motive, as I began to feel the beauty of his character, and the splendour of his genius—perceptions which grew upon me with every new day's study and observation. A sincere friendship now urged me to fathom the secret of his unrest, that I might bring to him, if not relief, at least a soothing sympathy.

"'What,' I continually asked myself, is the heavy cloud which forever darkens his thoughts. That no crime weighed upon his conscience, I knew well enough. He was incapable of wilful wrong to any, unless to himself. A selfish and morose temperament I was sure it could not be, for his nature was gentle, hopeful, and loving; deep, not boisterous; earnest, but not demonstrative. Thwarted ambition it was not, for he possessed the youth and genius, which might confidently aspire to the highest fame. Neither could poverty be the fatal drug at the bottom of his poisoned cup, since he seemed to set but little value upon riches, or any of the pleasures at their command: and there was evidently within his reach gold enough, at least, for all his desires.

"There remained but one other influence—the only one, indeed, powerful enough to so deeply affect and crush a strength like his. 'Here, then, lies the secret,' said I—but you shall

have the brief, sad tale, in his own words, as he told it to me, in an hour and mood of tearful confidence.

"It was a fearful night, and so wild was the storm, that being unable to regain my own home, I was compelled, not unwillingly, to accept the hospitality of the solitaire, at whose jealously guarded cottage I had been passing the day.

"A long conversation upon the nature and philosophy of life—the variety, weight, and value of its duties and delights, its hopes and fears—had led us to consider all the thousand impulses and desires which fill and stir the human heart.

"'The only real happiness, the only true life,' said my friend, as the night waned, 'lies, after all, in the culture and development of the affectionate part of our nature.' In the degree it may contribute to this growth, the humblest object becomes ennobled and hallowed; while, without this end, the loftiest and proudest possession and achievement is but an idle vanity. Love is the soul of content and pleasure in this life, as it is the evidence to our minds, and the hope to our hearts, of another higher and more lasting existence:—love in all its degrees of manifestation—from the cold sense of duty, which leads us to perform our rôle in life honestly and justly—to the tempest of passion, in which our very being is merged in that of another.'

"'Then, why,' said I, 'will you not be happy yourself in the cultivation of this subtle, perfumed flower of love? If I read your character truly, there are few natures better fitted to give and to win its virgin sympathy and devotion.'

"'My friend,' said the doctor, in a deep and earnest voice, and affectionately grasping my proffered hand, 'you have, I am certain, truly divined the hidden secret which I never thought to betray to any living soul, and which it has been my unceasing task to hide even from my own thoughts. I have cultivated that magic flower of love—watered it with all the fervour and devotion of my heart, and drank in its intoxica-

ting fragrance, until the whole world has seemed filled with its loveliness. Then I was strong and invincible in will, and effort, and hope, fearing nothing, and daring all things. Then—but why recall those joyous hours only to make the present weary days yet more desolate?"

"'And if the flower withered in its beauty,' said I, 'will not the same breath give life to another?'

"'Would that it had withered, for then the dead leaves would have remained to me, as a consolation and a hope. But it lived alas!—lived to kill, with its false and poisonous odour, the tender trust which it beguiled with a too rash life. Ah, my friend, you have never blindly groped in the black darkness which follows the setting of a sun like mine.'

"'Suns set to rise again, if we will but open our eyes to the dawning light, and the longest night has still the sweet, if less glowing, radiance of moon and stars to guide and cheer our way.'

"'The first crushing bitterness of my sorrow past,' continued the doctor, 'my pride, my manhood, and my reason all pointed to that softer light of which you speak, and the struggle of my life has since been, to grow content in the enjoyment of such poorer pleasures as it still left me. To this end I have sought to forget, in the quiet of the old woods, all the thoughts and scenes of the bitter past, and to fill my heart with new and less treacherous loves. I have learned many a lesson, not only of patience, but of hope, in the study of the useful page of Nature: learned to speak calmly to you, a stranger, of emotions that once maddened me when whispered to my own ears. Perhaps I may, in time, grow strong in their peaceful teachings, to resume my place, and play my part in the great theatre of life.'

"More than once, during this dialogue, had we stopped to remark the progress of the storm which had detained me at the

doctor's hearth, and which in its desolate spirit had, no doubt, much contributed to induce his unexpected confidence. I was about to question him more particularly of the circumstances which had so terribly and disastrously affected his life and character, not without a vague hope that all might yet be well, when our attention was arrested by what seemed to us the sound of human voices mingling with the mourning winds.

"'Our fears have deceived us,' said the doctor; 'this is a lonely neighbourhood, and it is seldom that a traveller passes, even in the sunshine. Certainly, at this hour, and in such a tempest, no one—'

"At this moment, the fancied voices came to us again, and now in unmistakable calls for help, and, immediately afterwards, there followed a loud and violent rapping at the door.

"'Well, well,' said the doctor in answer to my inquiring look, as I moved to admit the strangers, 'it would be brutish to refuse hospitality on such a night, but I cannot play the host until, at least, I know who are my guests. Serve me, my friend, now, as you have often done before, and take my place as master of the house.'

"While thus speaking, the doctor slipped into his private sanctum, and, unbolting the door, I admitted the benighted travellers.

"To my surprise, my eyes fell not upon weather-bound hunters, but upon an elderly gentleman and a young lady, evidently little used to such rude travel.

"Without stopping for a word of greeting, the father, as he seemed to be, wheeled a lounge up to the blazing fire—for fires are often needed in the summer time here—upon which he eagerly placed the half conscious girl, and sought to revive her by assurances of safety and comfort.

"While removing the numerous shawls and handkerchiefs in which she was half stifled, a miniature fell unobserved to

the floor, which, not wishing to disturb the anxious cares of the traveller, I placed silently upon the table.

"I am sorry to intrude upon you so unceremoniously," said the stranger at last, and when the invalid seemed somewhat more at ease; "but our carriage has been broken in the darkness of the night and the roughness of your mountain roads, and we had no alternative except to wait for morning in the woods."

"As I uttered a few words of the cordial welcome which I felt, the old man cast a wondering look over the apartment, evidently surprised at its unexpected elegance. His perplexity seemed to increase, as his eye fell upon the books and pictures, and other objects of taste and luxury which filled the adjoining room, the door of which the doctor had left open in his hasty retreat.

"But his whole care was again demanded by the suffering girl, who grew every moment more and more indisposed. A violent fever appeared to have seized her, and very soon her mind wandered, and she talked, incoherently, now of the scenes through which she had just passed, and then, of misfortunes and sorrows of years ago.

"The poor child," said the father, as we bent over the invalid, "has known affliction even in her young life, and despite all my jealous care. I brought her hither to distract her troubled thoughts, and to recruit her enfeebled health; and now, alas! I fear that I have but hastened the terrible fatality which I have so long dreaded. O, would that there were a physician near!"

"Thank heaven! your wish is not in vain," I cried, turning to seek the solitaire, whose medical skill I had not before thought of.

"But the doctor had anticipated me, and was already bending earnestly over the sick girl.

"'You!' ejaculated the old man, starting back with surprise and fear, as the hermit stood before her. 'Good heavens! what does all this mean—where am I——?'

"But the doctor was too much occupied with his patient to heed the words. Flying, almost, in his eagerness, he sought some medicines, which he as hastily and nervously administered.

"'Save her! save her!' cried the old man, 'for it is you who have killed her!'

"'I, who have killed her! I, who would have given my life to serve her idlest pleasure!'

"'Yes, you! By your unreasonable doubts, and your insane folly, crediting the rumours of the world, above her own pure and truthful nature. Listen to her wild ravings! What does she say? Is a love which can be so wounded, and yet so devoted, to be trampled upon at the first idle breath of slander?'

"The poor solitaire did listen, and his strong frame, invigorated by unceasing exercise in the forest air, shook like a reed with the deep agitation of his thought. Anguish and joy, remorse and hope, seemed alternately to tear his soul.

"Tremblingly clutching the pulse of the sick girl, he seized the old man's hand, and he gasped, 'Forgive me, and teach her, too, to pardon, for I—I also have suffered!'

"'Alas, alas!' was the only response of the sorrowing parent, 'she will not live to pardon.'

"'Not live! She shall live!' cried the doctor, in a tone of such indomitable will, as of itself to bring hope to the old man's heart.

"I had opened the fallen locket, and the picture within would alone have told me part of the tale which this scene unfolded, and which the wondering and happy eyes of the invalid concluded when they opened with returning consciousness, and rested upon the expressive face of the young doctor.

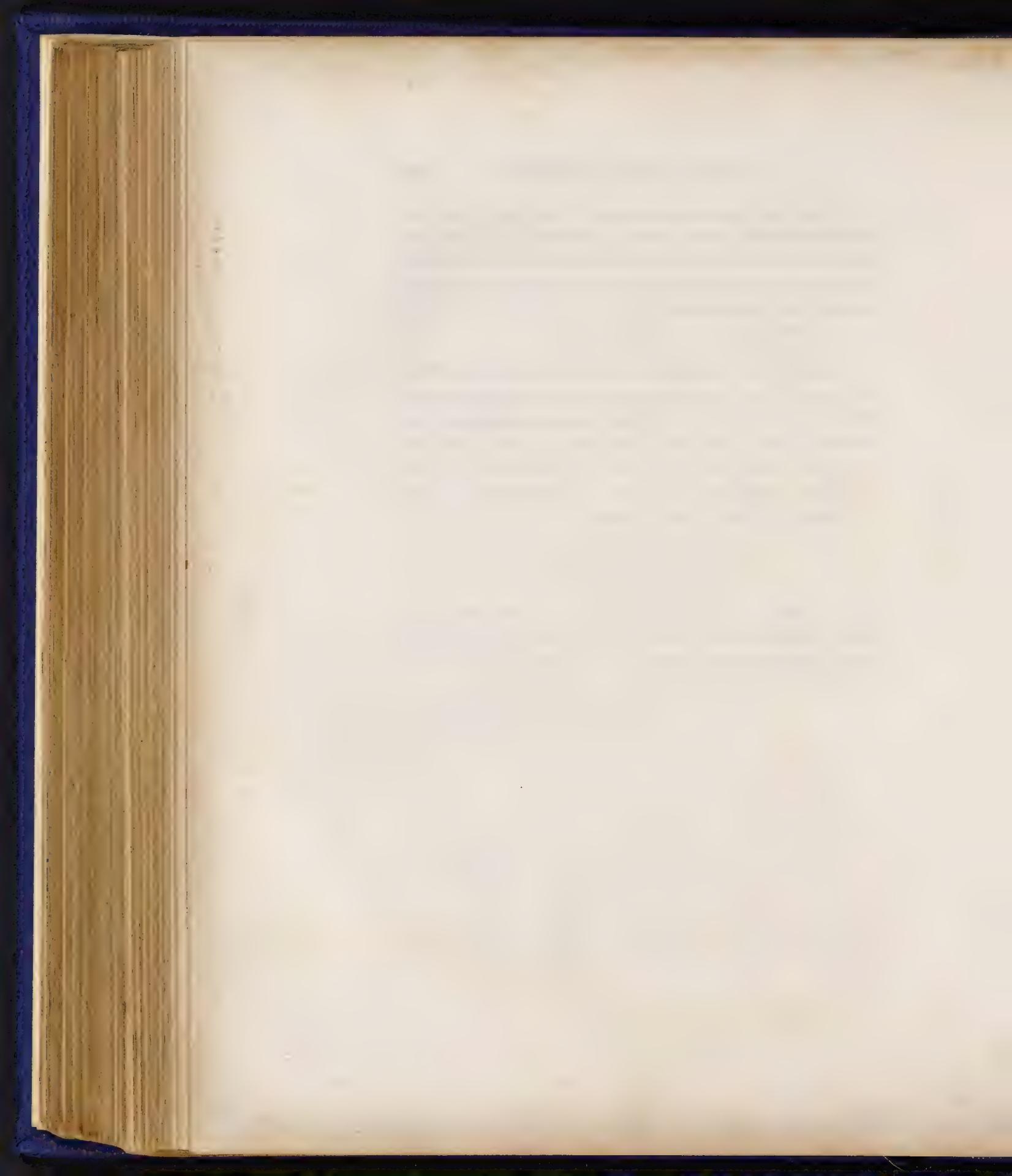
"I need not pursue my narrative, to tell you of the fair traveller's recovery, of the mutual explanations which followed, of the changed humour of the melancholy hermit, and of the ultimate loss to the Adirondacks of one of the most interesting and useful of its population."

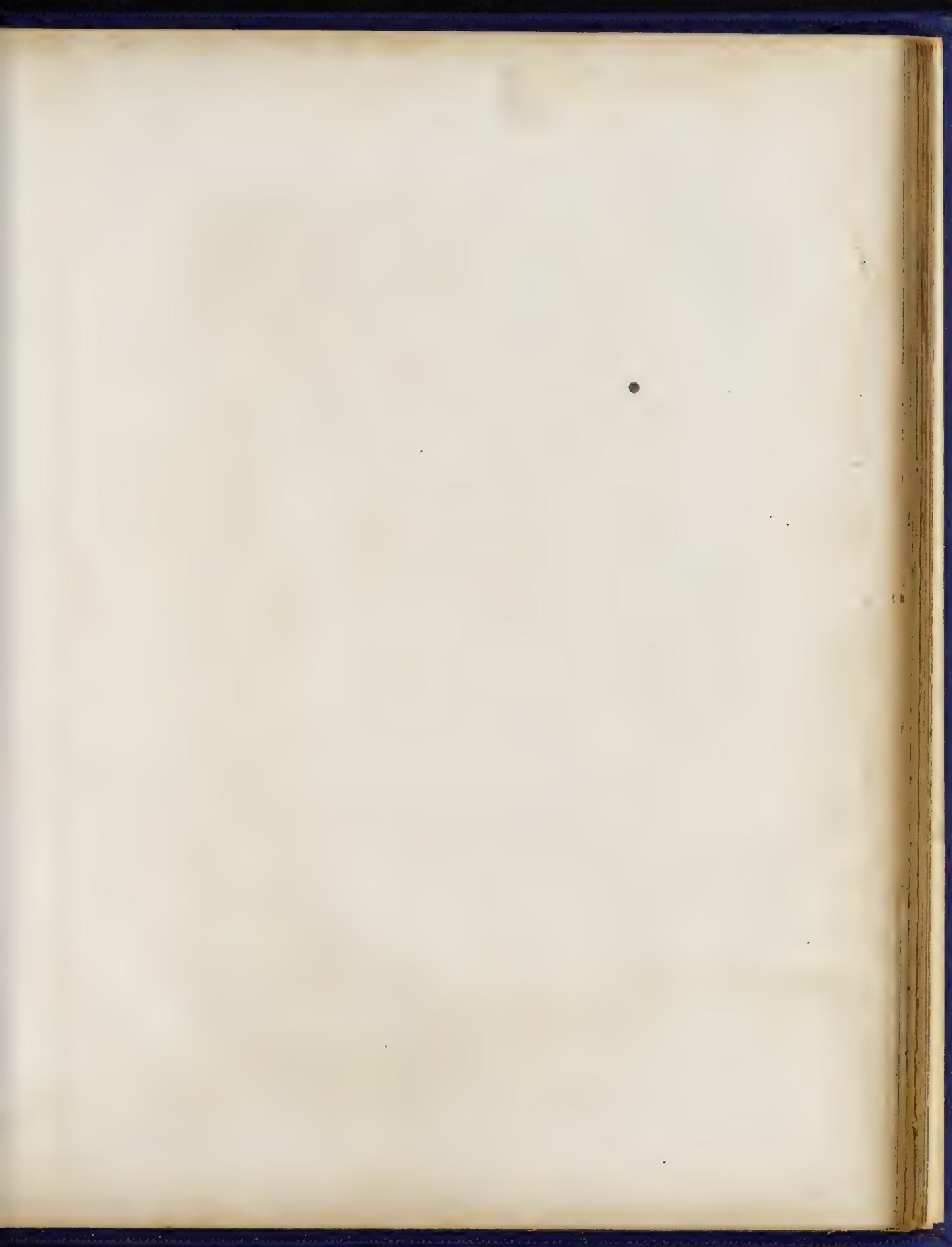
"Certainly a very affecting and instructive story," said Mr. Brownoker, "but I wonder, that in all my long rambles in the Adirondacks, I never should have heard a syllable of the wonderful hermit, and have never once set eyes upon his mysterious cottage *orné*."

"That," replied Mr. Asphaltum, "is because you do not see things with the true poetic vision."

"A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose is to him;
And it is nothing more,"

said Professor Scumble, as our friends, like Dr. Blimber's pupils, began to "ooze away."







CHAPTER XIII.

"NOTHING more easy," said Mr. Megilp, "now that we are leaving the Adirondacks, than to push across the sunny waters of Lake Champlain, into the comfortable domains of 'Down East.' The change, too, from the privations of our late rough hunting grounds, to the sleek comforts of New England domesticity, will make a welcome contrast."

"Patience, my dear fellow," said the Spartan chair. "That is a *bonne bouche* to be kept for the last. In the mean time, we have to run over that important pictorial sub-section of the republic, which the geographies call the Middle States, and of which Pennsylvania is the 'key-stone,' and little Delaware, and most maligned New Jersey, valuable 'bricks.' Maryland, too, though appertaining in some respects to the Southern household, is a near cousin of this branch of the family. And our own glorious home, which comes under the same classification, claims yet a tribute from our hands, in addition to the many pleasant things we have been already constrained to say of her. But the natural beauties of the Empire State are so various, and of such pre-eminent interest, that we cannot pretend to do more than glance at them. On our way to Pennsyl-

vania, we can delight our souls with the world-wide grandeur of the highlanded Hudson, and the verdant slopes and rugged bluffs of the untiring Catskills; neither of which leading episodes in our landscape, have we yet deigned to notice. Fortunately for us, they are both so familiarly known, as to require only passing mention.

"We have in our portfolio a beautiful picture of the Catskill region, from the magic pencil of our revered Prince of Landscapists—the lamented Cole.* The scene is a memorable one, lying near the mouth of the Catskill creek, those picturesque waters, which after dropping, in so many romantic and renowned cascades, through the gorges and glens of the noble hills westward, lend such additional charms to the sweet valley of the Hudson, in their gleesome journey to the great river. The material for pictorial study is so abundant and rich among the Catskills, that their summits and cloves have always been a favourite summer studio for our painters. Most of us have passed live-long months in their solitary glens. I was, myself, at one time, sketching here by the road-side, with two or three fellow daubers, at intervals, hard by, when casting my eye upon a passing vehicle, I descried the person, and caught the voice, of a city acquaintance. Amused to meet me so unexpectedly, after he had successively encountered my companions, he exclaimed, calling me by name:

"'Halloo! is that you Deepredde? Now, by the gods, I have often heard that these hills are infested by painters—vulgarism for panther—and I must, at last, believe the story!'

"Frequently in traversing a gorge of the Catskills, every turn has either brought me upon an enraptured student, or has shown me the traces of one, in an unfinished canvass, carefully secreted in the cavities of the rocks; or in scattered egg-shells and other *restes* of their frugal noon-tide bivouacs."

* See Vignette.

"Ah, you touch a happy chord now in the painter's experience," said Mr. Flakewhite. "Those genial days of summer vagabondage, wandering with sketch-box and staff over quiet smiling hill and dale, with no thoughts but those of beauty and pleasure: unmindful alike of coy patrons and snarling critics."

"The Catskills were a cherished haunt of our great Cole, who lived and died in their namesake village, near by," resumed the chairman. "Many of his finest pictures were studied here; and here he gathered much of the material of his famous epics of 'The Course of Empire,' and 'The Voyage of Life.' Here, too, our beloved living leader, Durand, who, with Cole and Doughty, form the great parent triumvirate of the present promising school of American landscapists, has studied with immortal success.

"All the younger painters, too, have drunk deeply of the same inspiring fountain. Here, Cropsey and Kensett have lovingly pored over the intricate and marvellous wonders of running waters and mossy rocks. Here, Church has looked abroad upon the glories of the rising and the setting sun. Here, too, Gifford has gathered strength for great achievement; while Casilear, and Gignoux, and Huntington, and Boutelle, and Hubbard, and Hart, and Cranch, with many others of our gifted brothers, look back to the Catskills as the kind alma mater of their professional life.

"But we linger too long. Farewell, gallant hills! and all hail! ye brave brotherhood, down there in the grand passes of the Highlands! ye rugged Breakneck! ye storied Crownest! and ye venerable old Dunderburg! Welcome all, ye hundred sweet whispers of stirring history, and poetic tradition, which, everywhere, reach us from wave and shore, as we float over the deep clear waters towards the busy city."

"While Deepredde makes his way down the Hudson,"

said Mr. Vermeille, "I, with your good leave, will take another route, following the rapid rail, via Trenton and Gennesee, to Niagara, and returning, through that world of winsome scenery, upon the upper Susquehanna, and the hill-caged Delaware, traversed by the five hundred iron miles of the Erie Road.

"The great cataract is beyond my eulogy. I cannot do justice to the subject, as the celebrated swearer said, turning despairingly to the crowd of expectant archins, when on reaching the brow of a weary hill, the back-board of his apple-cart gave way, and all its treasured contents rolled down again to the bottom. So we will leave Niagara to thunder its own great glory.

"The long route of the Erie Railway has opened a region of very changeful character. Here you dash through the broad valleys, watered by the Susquehanna and its affluents, and past the numberless quiet lakes of Western New York; and anon, you are buried in the wilderness of the brawling Delaware. While the chairman makes his way to the landscape of the Keystone State, through New Jersey, or via Philadelphia and Harrisburg, I will cut across the country, from some point on the Erie Road, and meet him in the fair Valley of Wyoming, that first of Nature's altars there."

"We could not have a better rendezvous," said Mr. Deep-redde, "than fair Wyoming, the home of the mythical Gertrude, and the culminating point of the picturesque on the Susquehanna, the noblest of those graphic rivers which form the chief sources of natural beauty in the Keystone State. She has no lake scenery except some fifty miles of the waters of the great Erie on her north-western boundary, though the stranger looking down, in early morning from the hill-tops, to the beds of dense, white fog spread over the low grounds, might think otherwise, until he grew wiser. It is only thus in our fancy that we may here see, as Campbell's noted vision saw, 'Lake after lake,

interminably gleam.' She has no striking cascades either, and her best mountain and valley views are seen from her river levels, or from the neighbouring heights; but the charming physique of the Susquehanna, the West Branch, and the Juniata—of the Delaware and its affluents, the Lehigh and the Schuylkill, is rich compensation for what she has not.

"The two great branches of the Susquehanna unite at the pleasant village of Northumberland, of which our portfolio furnishes us an agreeable picture, by the veteran Bartlett. Through the whole course of these arms, and thence to the Chesapeake Bay, it is more or less attractive; though its finest portions are above the junction—perhaps at Wyoming, and yet more particularly within the ten or twelve miles immediately south of that celebrated valley. At this point, the mountain shores soar to a bold and commanding height, and are exceedingly graceful in their lines: while the wooded islands, of liberal occurrence, add infinitely to the picturesque effect. Wyoming, which is an extremely fertile plain of twenty miles extent, is usually seen by tourists from the high hills back of the village of Wilkesbarre, though the most pleasing, if not the widest, view is to be had from the lofty grounds near Nanticoke, at the lower extremity of the valley, and at the entrance of that varied passage of the river to which I have just referred. Here the current is narrow, and, excepting when broken by shoals or rapids, is of unusual depth. Lower down, the river bed widens greatly, sometimes forming broad lake-like reaches. There sand-bars stretch out for a long distance, and so shallow, often, is the water, that the cattle groups, in hot summer days, wander out so far from the shore that they look like small moving islands.

"The Juniata, one of the chief tributaries of the Susquehanna, though inferior to that stream in pictorial wealth, is still stored with effective and winsome scenes. Mr. Murray, the dis-

tinguished English tourist, said, after his first view of this fine river, 'To my shame be it spoken, I never heard of the Juniata until this day.'"

"The blue Juniata," said Scumble, humming, *sotto voce*, the popular air of that name.

"It flows like most of its sister waters through fertile limestone valleys, shadowed by mountain ridges, in which iron ore is always abundant. None of these rivers are navigable, excepting the Delaware to Philadelphia. But canals have long followed their windings, and now railways are speedily increasing the facilities of travel and transportation."

"Allow me a moment," said Mr. Megilp, "to recall a thought of the pleasant days which I have passed on the Delaware, and particularly at that imposing scene, the great Water-gap. At this point, the river traverses the Blue Ridge through a grand gorge of two miles extent. On all sides, it is here hemmed in by huge precipices, which tower to the lofty height of twelve hundred, and even sixteen hundred feet, while space is scarcely left for public way between their base and the water. Seen from many of the higher situations around, this passage presents numerous striking studies for the painter.

"Not far remote, the Lehigh makes a similar break through the mountains, opening another volume of interesting pictures. This river, though smaller by far than those of which we have already spoken, is scarcely less charming. In its whole rugged mountain course, the changing scene is often impressive, and always picturesque.

"The Schuylkill, too, is a beautiful stream, though, excepting in its upper waters, it is of a more peaceful character than the Lehigh. It traverses the rich agricultural districts about Philadelphia, and greets the Delaware a few miles below that city. Near the capital, by the way, is a sweet little brooklet, called the Wissahiccon. It is an humble vassal of the Schuyl-

kill, but is held in high regard for its romantic beauties, and for the pleasant drives along its shady banks. The artists of Philadelphia know it well, and love it better than many a more ambitious torrent."

"We must not forget 'Little Delaware,'" said Mr. Brownoker, "though she offers us but the widow's mite in the way of landscape attraction. Yet this mite, as we find it along the romantic shores of the famous Brandywine, is well worth the having. Then, too, there are many scenes within her Lilliputian borders, which tell stirring tales of the olden time—the trying times when, as Scumble might say, our fathers were 'striking for the green graves of their sires, God, and their native land.'"

"Or New Jersey—maligned Jersey," added the chairman. "Many portions of her ostracized territory are flat enough to be sure, but think of the mountains and lakes in the northern districts: of fair Ramapo, of placid Greenwood, Wywayandah, Mackopin, and adjacent waters. Then, too, she has a share of the Delaware and its Water-gap, and the Palisades of the Hudson are part of her dower, though, to be sure, she has to cross over to the Empire State to see these jewels. But there is one charming spot, which is all her own—those famous falls of the Passaic at Patterson; and besides that, her long varied stretches of sea-coast, ending in that much prized resort for worn-out citizens, Cape May."

"Since the chairman has reached the jumping-off place of the Jerseys," said Mr. Vermeille, "I will wind up our topography of the Middle States, with a peep at the hills and streams of fair Maryland. Her mountain peaks extending through the narrow western strip of her domain, are not of very salient elevation, though rich in beauty, to the eye which will explore their solitary recesses. The Potomac and Patapsco, and the Patuxent Rivers have gathered, upon their shores, the

finest incidents in the picturesque of Maryland. The good people of Baltimore think very much of the rural charms which we ever find on the Patapsco at Ellicott's Mills, not far from their city homes. Just below, there is, you remember, an imposing viaduct of grand arches, which conducts the railways of Washington across the wide valley of Gwyn's Falls.

"The artist may pick up pleasing bits everywhere in this pleasant land, though it is not the region he would deliberately select for study."

"We must not leave this latitude," said Mr. Deepredde, "without a mention of the vast coal and iron beds of Pennsylvania, which are not only themselves quite a striking feature in the landscape, but have produced some other notable individuality, the canal scenery. The mining and transportation of coal is the chief business of life throughout all the great anthracite region we have travelled in our successful search for the picturesque between the shores of the Susquehanna and the Delaware. Seeing the begrimed faces of the groups of miners coming from their work may, sometimes, lead you, for a moment, to think you are again traversing the cotton lands of the South. Boating on the canals has no little influence upon the manners and character of the population, since it seems to be a law of nature among the youth here, to spend a certain part of their years in this sort of life, as in Prussia it is a law of the land that every one shall for a season be a soldier."

"Speaking of the Pennsylvania canals," said Mr. Megilp, "recalls to my mind a little incident of travel in which I had the good fortune to remove some dangerous snags from the current of true, though humble love. It is a simple instance of

Love's Labour Won.

"We were weather-bound—my friend and I—at a quiet country inn on Susquehanna's side. The hospitable people did their best to make us comfortable, and we, according to our habit, seconded their generous endeavour to the utmost of our philosophy and ability; but the united 'pull' was rather ineffectual. It would have been entirely so, but for the grace and wit and good humour of our hostess's daughter, a ruddy lass, who poured out our coffee, made our beds, and was obliging enough to laugh at all our poor jokes.

"In her desire to make us at home, Sarah Jane had resigned to our use her own little boudoir, as we saw at once, in the many subtle indications of female occupancy: not so much the various mystic garments which bedecked the low white walls, as the neat fringed window curtains, the pretty easy tidy-covered rocking chair, the dainty little toilette stand, with its budding rose blossoms, its bottle of nice perfume, its bits of ribbon, and the stray hair pins, here and there, and more especially, the general indescribable air and aroma of the apartment. Here were some books, too: a morocco bible, received as a reward of merit from a Sabbath school, a little collection of gems from the poets, particularly the blighted ones—the gems, not the poets; a carefully preserved album, nearly empty; a 'Love's Token, from J. B.'; a daguerreotype—probably 'J. B.' himself; and several interesting, though rather ancient annuals, among them a well worn 'Farmer's Almanac.'

"All these things, from the wardrobe to the calendar, amused us but for a moment, and we looked about for other inspiration. It seemed to come at our wish, when, as we

opened the little drawer of the toilette, our greedy eyes fell upon a packet of letters, finished and unfinished, and in a lady's hand.

"It was very naughty in us to look at more than the outsides of these sacred missives, but what could we do? We were expiring with ennui, and then, too, they might concern Sarah Jane, and we took a lively interest in Sarah Jane. On examination, Sarah Jane's they truly seemed to be, either as the work of her own hands, or as the gift of another. We perused them with glowing interest, for, supposing them to be hers, they explained to us that pensive grace which so sweetly toned her naturally buoyant nature—that store of secret sad thought and experience which gave so much repose to her manner. It was an oft-told tale of love and disappointment. 'J. B.', the donor of the 'Token' already mentioned, proved to be Joseph Brown, once genuinely attached to Sarah Jane, as she to him, but misunderstandings—foolish enough, no doubt—had sent Joseph off, in a huff and a hurry, to the war in Mexico. From the date of his farewell letter—a most affecting document—it appeared to be about a year and a half since his rash flight; but to poor Sally it was evidently a whole epoch of time; at least so said the numerous unsent epistles which the drawer exposed.

"After supplying, by our imagination, all the missing links in the drama before us, we taxed our brain, like good knights-errant, for some means of assisting, or, at least, of consoling Sarah Jane; without, of course, betraying any knowledge of her hidden story. At last, we struck a vein, and retired to rest, to work it in our dreams.

"The next morning, as we were smoking our cigars in the little dining-room, and watching Sarah Jane as she cleared and put away the table things, I expressed to my companion a wonder as to the whereabouts and doings of our friend Brown.

"Sarah Jane looked up as I spoke, and with some sign of interest, when my chum replied, carelessly:

"'What, Joe? Oh, I suppose he has picked up some pretty senorita in Mexico, and settled down to domestic life.'

"'Not he!' I added. 'Don't you remember how desperately in love he was with some girl or other, here, at home?'

"'Oh, yes, I remember very well, but she jilted him; flirted with a rival beau, or did some other diabolical thing! It was that which sent him off, and of course he wouldn't hurry back on her account.'

"Our dialogue had won so suddenly and so deeply on Sarah Jane's attention, that, at this point, the cream-jug fell from her hand to the floor with a fatal smash; but she did not observe the accident, as she exclaimed, with eagerness half to herself, and half to us:

"'He deceived himself! I—she—the girl, I mean, didn't jilt him, or flirt with somebody else—that is, she didn't mean to, and he ought to have known better! I—the girl, I mean, always loved him better than—'

"Here she paused abruptly, becoming conscious of the odd confidence into which her excited feelings were betraying her; and we, to release her embarrassment, assured her that *our* Joe Brown could not have any relation whatever to her friend's self-defended truant.

"'But now that I think of it, he *may*, possibly, be the very one,' said I, when Sarah Jane had regained her usual composure. 'I have heard him speak of the Susquehanna as his native river.'

"'Of course,' said my companion, 'he used to live just about this very neighbourhood!'

"'What sort of a looking man was he you are thinking of?' said I to Sarah Jane. 'A tall, handsome chap, large eyes,

fine nose, curly hair, and so-forth?" describing the daguerreotype we had found up stairs.

"'Yes! yes, exactly! His hair is as black and curly as—
as it can be; he has very black eyes, a beautiful mouth—but
you would know him, in a minute, by a large scar just above
his right eye.'

"'Why?' I exclaimed, 'it must surely be our very friend
Joe, whom we met at New Orleans about a year and a half
ago. He was just such a man; had just such a scar on his
face!'

"'Yes, it is he!' said Sarah Jane, abstractedly.

"'And does the girl he was engaged to,' I asked, 'love
him still?'

"'O, yes; I'm sure she does; but he does not believe it.'

"'Well,' said I, 'if I can find him out, I'll take care that
he *shall* believe it.'

"'O, dear, no! not for the world. You mustn't do any
such thing! I—that is, she—wouldn't have you tell him so
for anything.'

"At this moment the entrance of mamma put a stop to
our dialogue, but we managed to renew it on various occasions
during our few days' sojourn, and so effectually as to completely
win our fair friend's simple confidence, even to the frank confes-
sion that she, herself, was the deserted flame of the misguided
runaway. We became so much interested in her story and
character, in the picture she drew of her lover, that we were
perfectly convinced that if Brown still lived, time, and a
true affection, would bring him back again; and we mentally
vowed to assist time in this process, without thinking how
unlikely it was, that we should find any means of effecting
such a chimerical design.

"In this conviction and purpose, we bade good-bye to our
pretty friend, with words of hope, and with assurances that all

would yet be well, and her own constancy be rewarded by the return of Joe with heart as true as ever.

"Weeks slipped away, and the changing incidents of travel, the charm of new adventures and new acquaintance, had quite obscured, if not obliterated, the memory of our rencontre with Sarah Jane; though our regard for her, at the time, was sincere enough.

"Travellers soon learn to take a quick and personal interest in all they meet, and in the many little affairs in which accident may for an instant mingle them. And happy it is for them, that, denied the delight of continued loves, they are thus able to form fleeting ones; to divide among many, the penchants they are by circumstance forbidden to bestow only on a few. Miserable fellows, indeed, would they be, could they not thus carry their affections with them, and both give and withdraw their loves as time and place command. And so far from this disposition being a sign of heartlessness, it is the best evidence of an affectionate nature; showing, as it does, a necessity of love and sympathy, superior to the worst obstacles to its manifestation. Thus was it with ourselves: though, at the moment, we would have given our whole souls to serve Sarah Jane, yet when we had left her, we found another Sarah Jane, and so on, happily, forever.

"But I meant to give you a story, and not an essay. Weeks, I have said, had passed—months, indeed; the summer which we had begun on the head-waters of the Susquehanna, was now waning, finding us, to be sure, still on the shores of the giant 'crooked river,' but hundreds of miles below our starting point. Thus far our journey had been without let or hindrance, but at the moment of which I now speak we were

on the eve of an adventure—an adventure very unusual for that vicinity.

"We were on foot, as we had been most of the season, and being anxious to reach a certain point before halting, were walking longer after night-fall than was our custom. Generally, it mattered but little to us how late we kept the road, but on this occasion, we did not, through some influence or other, feel quite at our ease. Since dusk we had felt annoyed by the dogged pursuit of a couple of gallows-looking pedestrians; and the moon, who, per promise of her calendar, should have been our friend, hid herself suddenly behind huge banks of gloomy black cloud—making the forms and faces of our questionable companions more unpleasing than ever. Yet we laughed at our half-expressed fear of an attack from them. The mere idea of the verdancy which would seek to rob a strolling painter, was convulsive in its drollery. Then I bethought me of my adventure with the imaginary highwaymen, which I related to you when we were on the Ohio. I was inwardly laughing at that remembrance, as our road led us into the depths of a thick copse, which stretched for some distance along the river bank. I had barely time, as we entered its gloomy recesses, to call the notice of my friend to the accelerated approach of our ugly followers, before I saw him struggling with one of the miscreants, and found myself parrying the hearty blows of the other. The contest was very unequal; they were heavy stalwart chaps, and we were partially disarmed by the paraphernalia of our travelling baggage, sketch-boxes, and the like. We were beginning to chuckle over the coming disappointment of our assailants, as they should explore our meagre purses, when just at that moment, the faithless moon came to the rescue, shedding a flood of light upon the scene; and what was still more to the purpose, revealing the approach of yet another traveller. The





merest glance told us, as by instinct, that the new-comer was a friend, and uttering the first words which had as yet been spoken, we called upon him for help. A few lusty whacks, to the right and left, of his willing staff, aided by the increased vigour of our own blows, soon did the business, and left us to watch the flying retreat of our assailants with a feeling of intense satisfaction.

"We were then within a mile of our destined halt, and as our gallant defender was also looking for quarters, we persuaded him to accompany us, and, at least, be our guest for the night, since he refused other acknowledgment of the timely service which he had so heartily rendered us. To this he consented, and as we began to know him better, over our coffee and cakes, we were glad of the acquaintance for other reasons than his late good aid; for he proved to be one of those genial, intelligent, and experienced travellers, whom fellow-voyagers so much like to meet.

"Our first gossip, of course, related to the circumstances of the late assault, and to expression of surprise that such an incident should have happened in this usually quiet and secure region.

"'The business of the canals,' said our strange friend, 'infests the country with gangs of lawless foreigners, who will use any safe chance to better their beggarly fortunes. Yet, whoever the rascals may be, I am vexed that such an outrage should have occurred on the banks of old Sus', my native river; more beautiful, and more dear to me, than all of the many greater waters I have seen.'

"Here he entertained us with reminiscences of the Neuces, the Rio Grande, the Colorado, and other streams in Texas and Mexico, from which countries it appeared he was even then returning; but every few sentences would bring him back to the winding Susquehanna.

"We spoke of our own long explorations of the old river, from its sources, even to the point where we then were.

"'Ah!' said the stranger. 'In such a minute journey, you may possibly have tarried at the little village of B—.'

"'O, yes! we passed some very agreeable days at the cozy inn there.'

"'Indeed! then you may tell me some news, which I should like to hear, for I—I once spent some happy hours there myself. Are the old folks of the inn—alive and—well?'

"'Jolly as need be!' we answered, 'at least they were so some weeks only ago.'

"'And their daughter—they had a—'

"'O, yes! Sarah Jane! a pretty, clever girl; though silly enough to sigh herself to sadness, for some shabby scoundrel, who stole her heart, and then deserted her. By the way, we have her portrait in our sketch-books.'

"'Perhaps you will let me see it?' said our new friend, with eager interest.

"'Certainly,' we answered, and diving into our knapsacks, we brought forth the sketch.

"After a long and silent contemplation of the picture, which was a capital likeness, he turned to us, saying: 'You have generously offered me a reward for the slight service I have had the luck to render you to-night—will you make me the debtor, instead of yourselves, by giving me this sketch?'

"'With the greatest pleasure,' I replied, now fully satisfied of a fact, which the last few moments had led me to suspect, and which a glance showed me to have also entered the noddle of my companion. With this clue once given, we rapidly recalled in the stranger's face, the traits of the daguerreotype we had found in Sarah Jane's drawer; though time and travel had greatly changed his appearance. Still, so certain were we of the truth of our surmise, that we knew as much before,

as after, our friend had told us that his name was Joseph Brown!

"I will not fatigue you with the details of the manner in which it pleased us to tell Joseph the story of our visit to the home of his lady-love, and the yet more welcome news of her continued affection for him; or the words in which he spoke to us of the unhappy circumstances which had made him an exile from the heart he still sighed to call his own. Suffice it to say, that we easily persuaded him to abandon his purpose of never more seeing Sarah Jane; while we cautioned him to keep the secret, for a while, of his acquaintance with ourselves, beyond a plea of guilty—should he be so charged—of casually meeting us in New Orleans, at the commencement of his wanderings!

"At parting, we gave Joseph our address in exchange for a promise to inform us when our 'love's labour' should be won. This desired intelligence we received, not long after, in a joint letter from Joseph and Sarah Jane, inviting our presence at a certain interesting ceremony; or, in default, claiming as early a visit as possible, to our old haunts on the Susquehanna; the damsel maliciously added, that she should not be able to give us her own little boudoir again, seeing, not only, that it would not henceforth be a 'spare-room,' but that she could not trust such very inquisitive people among her seerets! This sly allusion to our impudent curiosity in reading her letters—of which Joseph, the ungrateful dog, had, despite his promise, told her—has always made me regret the many occupations which, to this day, have denied me an opportunity to receive from her own lips, the pardon long since accorded in the messages which I continued, and, indeed, still occasionally continue, to receive from her."

"My love to Sarah Jane," said Mr. Brownoker, replenishing his glass, and passing the sherry to Megilp, as he ended his

romantic anecdote. "The next time I go that way I will give her a call."

"And I, and I, and I!" added the rest of the brotherhood, severally and collectively. "And here's good luck to Joseph, too!"

"Sarah Jane" thus disposed of, our friends were about to separate, when Professor Scumble unfortunately alluded to a record we once made of some rather amusing incidents which transpired in the Quaker City; and which, none of the company happening to know, we were unanimously called upon to rehearse.

"The story," said Mr. Flakewhite, "will be apropos as we halt in Philadelphia, on our return from the Susquehanna."

We objected that it would be but a "twice told tale;" but our scruples being arbitrarily overruled, and as it was still only the "edge of the evening," and something was needed, pour passer le temps, we reluctantly rummaged over our old manuscripts, and produced the following account of

Mr. Brown's Strategy.

"No! I tell you, I will be a match for her; I'll play Petruchio to her Katharine! A wife usurp my prerogative! take the ribbons out of my hands! I, Frank Morton, bow to a woman's rule! Ha, ha! droll—very—'pon my soul—very droll—No! no, ladies,

"Cursed be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
The crouching vassal of the tyrant wife:
Who has no will but by her high permission;
Who has not sixpence, but in her possession;

Who must to her his dear friend's secrets tell ;
Who dreads a curtain lecture worse than h---l !
Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
I'd crush her spirit, or I'd break her heart !"

There, you have the sentiments of poor Burns, with my hearty endorsement. I, a henpecked husband ! Hercules, an infant—Leonidas, a coward—Washington a traitor, and Mrs. Macbeth a saint !"

"Ha, ha, Frank ! you may talk and laugh and jest—you may flatter yourself as you please, but it won't do, brother mine; just marry Isadora Cruston—marry Isadora Cruston—you'll see——"

"Yes, marry Isadora !" from a second soft voice ; "marry Isadora ! Isadora ! marry Isadora !" from a whole host of fair lips—"Isadora ! Marry Isad——"

"Tut, tut, tut ladies ! I cry you mercy ! My poor ears are only flesh and blood ! You are all prejudiced; all wrong. Isadora a shrew ! preposterous ! as I will prove to you—but there she goes now, past the window, on her way home ! I must join her—adieu, ladies—may you never find in a husband more of a tyrant than I shall have in Isadora Cruston—*au revoir !*"

"Good bye, but mark us—marry Isadora——"

"Again farewell—I'm off !"

"Isadora Crus——"

"Bah !"

"Marry Isado—— ah ! he's off !"

And so, dear reader, he *was* off, and by the side of the fair belle aforesaid ; and, of course, we cannot join them until we become better acquainted with the parties. The preceding war of jests arose from a slight difference of opinion between Mr. Frank Morton, and his sister and other fair friends, touching the docility of his lady-love, Miss Isadora Cruston. Isadora was a dashing belle, and Frank a dashing beau. Isadora had

set her cap for Frank; and Frank, though he had escaped many similar snares, had very stupidly popped his silly head therein. Thus Isadora was the envy of all her fair associates, who, very willingly, vented their spleen in owlish predictions for the future.

Frank had long remained a bachelor, from the avowed fear of finding only a termagant in a wife; which was, of course, a gracious compliment to the many who were ready to prove to him the folly of his doubts, and to vindicate the character of their sex. In Isadora, he fondly hoped, he had at last found the ingenuous and confiding creature for whom his heart yearned, and he was bent upon calling her his wife.

We are now, perhaps, sufficiently intimate with the betrothed to follow them into the parlour of the lady's mansion, which they were not long in reaching.

Isadora has tossed her hat to her obedient lover, but why it should pass through *his* hands to the table, he does not precisely comprehend. Despite his desire that she should take a seat by his side upon a sofa, she has placed herself at the piano, and has summoned him to turn the leaves of her music-book, a task which, it occurs to his mind, she might more effectually perform herself. Yet he banishes the preposterous reflection, and begs that she will sing for him the pretty song, "Thou, thou reignest in this bosom."

At this sentimental demand, the gay lady bursts into an unconquerable fit of merriment, and with a slight sneer replies, "I will sing something quite as novel and more sensible—listen!"

"The lords of creation men we call,
And say they rule the whole;
But they find after all, whatever they do,
They are under woman's control—ole—ole,
They are under woman's control!"

Frank thought of the party which he had just left; but, alas! the bewitching eyes of the fair tyrant, at the same instant, met his own, and he

"Was under woman's control—ole—ole,
He was under woman's control!"

"Now Frank, is not that much more rational than such worn-out, lackadaisical stuff as that you wish to hear?"

"Why, my love, I don't say that——"

"You can't say! why, you won't allow me the least taste in the world! You used to praise my singing, be it what it might."

"Well, my love, it *is* a pretty song—certainly very pretty; indeed, one of the prettiest I have ever heard. Every thing is beautiful from your lips; sing as you please, I would still, as Shakspeare says, have you ever sing so!"

"Oh! very gallant, to be sure, sir; but you do not like it, after all. You have no sympathy, no appreciation for my tastes. We have opposite fancies in every thing, and shall never be happy together."

"Pardon me, Isadora, if I have unintentionally offended you—I did not think to do so. I consider your taste and judgment to be always and in all things faultless and infallible. But, Isadora, dearest—now don't be angry—that song reminded me of what they were saying at Mrs. —— just before I joined you in the street; but, pshaw! that's all nonsense; I'll not repeat it."

"Why, Frank, what were they saying about me?"

"Oh! I'll not remember it, dear—'tis too absurd!"

"But you *must* tell me, Frank!"

"No, no, dear—'tis too silly."

"But I *will* hear it."

"Do ex——"

"Not a word! You excite my curiosity, and refuse to gratify it. It's just like you; you have no regard for my feelings. You take a pleasure in teasing me."

"But it will only offend you, Isad——"

"You will offend me more if you do not tell me directly. I *will* know what they said."

"Well then, dearest, if I must repeat it—they hinted—they insinuated—ha, ha, ha, only think of the idea—capital joke, 'pon my soul!—they suggested that you—you, Isadora, my angel, would—would——"

"For heaven's sake would what, sir?"

"Would prove to be a very queen of termagants!"

"Oh! the slanderers—the malicious vilifiers! I wish I could tear their eyes out—I do!"

"Isadora!"

"And you, sir, heard it all patiently and smilingly, and did not attempt to defend me! Oh! dear; why did I ever love such an unfeeling creature!"

"Why, to tell the truth, dear——"

"Don't speak to me! You do not care a straw for me, it's as plain as——"

"Forgive me, love; the truth is, as I was going to say, that I thought the idea too absurd to be angry at it; and, besides, I knew they were only jesting. They cannot really hold such a ridiculous opinion of you, any more than I do."

"Well, Frank, I will believe you and forgive you, on one condition. Promise me, on your honour, not to go there again!"

"But, Isadora, that would be foolish and unkind; they are my best friends—they are——"

"The slanderers of your 'angel'—your 'only hope in life'—as you gallantly call her; yes! sacrifice me to your dear friends—do, I beg of you——"

"Isadora, you attach too much import to a trifle; but I

cannot refuse you anything—you are my only treasure—and I promise——”

“Sacredly?”

“Most religiously, dearest!”

“Oh, Frank! it is now my turn to ask forgiveness. Now, I know that you do indeed love me, and I will not doubt it again.”

“We will then forget them all, dear; and, for the atonement which you offer me, I will but abridge your days of freedom a little. You shall prove your forgiveness of my fault, and gain a pardon for your own, by a speedy appointment of our bridal. You know that you have half promised that it shall be next Thursday, my birthday; now say positively that that shall be the happy hour.”

“Thursday! I’m sure I did not say Thursday!”

“But, my love, that is an interesting time to you—my birthday ought certainly——”

“I don’t like Thursday; it shall be the next day!”

“Friday, Isadora! But that, you know, is an unlucky day.”

“What day can be unlucky which crowns your most earnest hopes. It shall be only Friday.”

“How perverse you are, Isadora.”

“Yes! every thing I do or say is stupid.”

“I mean—I mean—I was only jesting, dear. You know best, and it shall then be Friday.”

“No, you don’t like Friday; you say it is unhappy, and you fear the results. I won’t have Friday!”

“Well then, my love, Saturday.”

“How overbearing you are, Frank, to be sure. Now do, for mercy’s sake, let me have my own way in this matter, at least. It shall be on Monday afternoon.”

“Monday?—”

"Yes, sir; Monday afternoon, and no other time—that's decided; so don't say a single word more about it."

"Well, dearest, may heaven then hasten and bless next Monday; and, Isadora, dear, we will be married at eight o'clock, and at nine start off in the cars for B——, as you proposed. You see I let you make all the arrangements."

"Eight! I'm sure I never said anything about eight o'clock; and I wouldn't be married at such an hour for the world. Eight, indeed! how could you think of such a thing, Frank. It shall be ten; and we'll take the steamboat for C—— at noon."

"Agreed, dear; it shall be ten, that's all settled, and every thing shall be quiet and private, as you desire."

"Private, Frank! What, a private wedding. Why, Frank, I vow I should feel that I was going to be buried! Private, indeed, I never said anything of the kind; but I see you are determined to have it all your own way."

"I only thought, dearest, that you wished it to be so."

"No, I don't! We must have a large party, and every body must be invited. All the world are married in private, now-a-days; but, for my part, I think that a wedding, at least one like ours, should be accompanied by every token of gladness and joy."

"So it should be—and so it shall be, love; and the whole world shall be there!"

"No; I don't want such a jam as Ellen Brown had. She says she wouldn't go through it again, for all the husbands in creation. We will only have a very select number—very few."

"Arrange it then, my love, as you please. Make out the list of names and I will help you with the cards. But now I must leave you for a while. Business you know, Isadora, must not be neglected even for love. Good-bye—good-bye, dear! What a preposterous idea, Isa, that of Sydney Brown and his friends.

We'll soon expose their folly—eh, Isadora—ha, ha, ha! God bless you!"

The long wished-for Monday at length arrived. Ten o'clock drew near. A large party was assembled in the gay parlours of Mrs. Cruston's mansion; among the guests, were all the friends of the lovers, excepting only Mr. Sydney Brown, who to the astonishment of every body, had not been invited. The bridal ceremony passed off happily and merrily, and Frank Morton became a fated Benedict. Congratulations and kisses, God-bless-yous and Heaven-protect-yous, were duly exchanged; noon came; the boat was ready; the happy couple waved farewell mouchoirs to waving mouchoirs upon the shore, and were fairly off, on a six months' bridal tour in Europe.

* * * * *

Six months were with the Past; during which many varied events had happened; such as hopes delayed, visions fled, and the opposites of fears dissipated, and joys consummated; with all other appropriate lights and shades in half a year of the picture of life. Among other items, and which is more interesting to us, at this time, the steamer which had conveyed our friends to Europe, had duly made her appointed trips to and fro, and was now, again, dropping anchor at the wharf, after a homeward voyage.

Among the passengers one stood apart, listlessly gazing over the bulwarks of the vessel, as though it were a matter of life and death to him, to arrive at an exact estimate of the number of bubbles in the foaming waters below. The life and joy which should sparkle in the eye of the returning exile, dwelt not in his. His whole air was sad and hopeless. Neither in his toilet was there visible any trace of the care and taste which it was, nevertheless, very evident once belonged to the man. The vessel was securely moored at the dock, and happy greetings were swiftly flying from lip to lip, of long parted friends.

All was animation and joy, excepting only with our solitaire. He still mused apart, apparently unconscious that his native land and the friends of his heart were awaiting his recognition and kindly interchange of welcome. During his continued fit of abstraction, a gentleman, from the shore, passed and re-passed, gazing earnestly in his face, until at length, stopping abruptly before the muser, he seized his hand, and shaking it with most commendable heartiness, exclaimed—"I'm sure of it now! 'tis none other than he! Frank! Frank Morton, my old boy, how the devil are you? and who are you mourning for, with 'the grief which passeth show?' for though you look as though the whole world and his wife were dead, I see no crapey trappings about you!"

"Wife—dead!" exclaimed the muser, as the words of the speaker gave voice to his thoughts; and then perceiving the presence of the stranger, the clouds fled from his brow, and he cordially returned his salutation, exclaiming—

"Ah! Sydney, is that you! the first to welcome me home. I am glad, very glad of it, for you are my best friend, and your presence calls back the memory of more joyous days."

"Thank you, Frank! that's a kind speech, and I'll take it in atonement for the scurvy trick you played me, in cutting me so unaccountably at the time of your marriage."

"Say no more about that, Sydney. It was not my fault; indeed it was not. She——"

"O! certainly, my dear boy! I thought your neglect confoundedly queer, to be sure, but I put it all down to the effect of some cursed misunderstanding or other, which, however, I concluded to let you enjoy all to yourself. I see we are now friends again, though; so let it go. What's the good of obscuring present sunshine with the sour shadows of the past. I was expecting you back about this time, the happiest dog in the kennel of life, but I see, confound it, that your dog-days

are fading. Come, discuss unto me; make a clean breast of it, and I'll help you out of the scrape. Trouble always flies from my footsteps; hates me like poison—out with it, Frank, out with it!"

"Ah! Sydney, I see that you are the same merry, joyous fellow as ever. To meet you, makes me happy again."

"Happy again," Frank! Why, have you been otherwise? Is she dead?"

"Oh! no, no—come nearer—speak low—you remember our conversation on that morning——?"

"Aye, to be sure! I've said the same things so often that I cannot forget them. They are part of my creed. But how is that confab apropos of the change which appears to have come over the spirit of your dream? There's the mystery! I can hardly believe that I see before me, the same dashing, hopeful, devil-may-care Frank Morton, whom I knew in other days! But that conversation! Remember it! Why, I am still a jolly old bachelor; ha, ha, ha! Remember it, aye!

'Cursed be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
The crouching vassal of the tyrant wife!"

It's my morning and evening devotion, Frank! My elixir, my shield, my everlasting buckler, the cosmetic which preserves me as I am; jolly and fat as an alderman, and smiling as a *danseuse!* yes—

'Cursed be the man, the ——"'

"Stop, Sydney! for heaven's sake, stop! Don't curse *me!*"

"Eh! *you!* no! By the gods! I—I—no, you're joking; aye, you're joking? You don't mean— By the powers! I smell a mouse! Was I right? am I right? ha, ha, ha, hold me! hold me! 'Tis too rich!"

"Alas! alas! My dear friend, you have divined but too truly; be generous though, and spare me, I pray you, your bitter raillery."

"Spare you, my poor deluded lamb! It's enough to kill me with laughter, ha, ha, ha! It's too funny, Frank, for sympathy, but I'll help you out of the scrape—I'll help you out, old fellow!"

"You will!"

"To be sure! there's my hand!"

"It's of no use, Sydney; it's too late; the die is cast. I thank you for your good will, but there is, alas, no help for it now. She is—is—in short—why should I hesitate to confess it? I shall not be at home a week before all the world will know it as well as myself—she is a perfect shrew—a termagant—a devil!"

"I knew it, Frank, before you spoke it. Ha! ha! my beauteous Isadora. I read more than the title-page of your disposition, which I am sorry my poor friend did not——"

"Gently, Sydney! She will hear us."

"Let her hear, Frank; she shall hear and see and feel more yet; I tell you I'll manage the business!"

"Are you in earnest, Sydney? I know you can do anything."

"Of course I can; I'll fix it; I'll cure her; she shall become a very pattern of gentleness, meekness, and obedience."

"Alas! my friend, you are not a Hercules."

"Have not quite so much muscle certainly; but, let me alone—I'll borrow a trifle of his 'kinted wit.' If I can't cleanse these Augean stables of termagantism, I will rig up an Euphrates to dash through them. By Jupiter! It will be a glorious little piece of work, worthy of my genius. Be hopeful, Frank; I'll soon make a rattling among the dry bones, I promise you! Let's drink."

"Hush, Sydney! Here comes Isadora's maid. Well, Jane, what does your mistress want?"

"If you please, sir, she says that you have been lounging up here long enough, and that you must come into the cabin directly."

"Oh! ye gods and little fishes!" muttered Sydney—"do my ears deceive me!"

"Be quiet, my dear Sydney," interposed the husband; and then turning to the maid, he added, "Tell Mrs. Morton that I will be down directly."

"The devil you will!" interrupted the other, and then, addressing himself to Jane, "tell Mrs. Morton that her husband is conversing with his old, cherished friend, Mr. Sydney Brown, and cannot possibly oblige her at present. Mr. Sydney Brown, remember, my dear."

"No, no, Sydney, that will never do. It will be the death of me. Jane!"

But Jane was off.

"Frank, my boy, you must remember that, live or die, I undertake this only upon one condition; that you leave it all to my discretion, and pledge yourself solemnly, to second me boldly, heartily, and implicitly, in every individual item of my plan. What say you?"

"Sydney, you are a master-spirit. I am yours!"

"Good! signed and sealed. Now, while Mrs. M. is digesting your palatable message, let us go down below and drink to victory or death. Allons, my old buck. *Nil desperandum*, as the Latins have it; 'Time, faith, and energy,' as Bulwer echoes it; and 'Never do to give it up so, Mr. Brown,' as I always say myself."

The return of the Mortons was the signal for a long series of visits, congratulations, gossipings, confabs, and merry-makings, throughout the extensive circle of their acquaintance. Old beaux

and flirts were eager to offer their sighs again at the shrine of the former queen of their reunions, and antiquated belles were curious to observe how she bore her matronly dignities. The younger of both sexes swelled the fêtes, for their own individual and mutual satisfaction, little regardful of their hosts. To the latter, therefore, every thing was, of course, just as it should be. Mr. and Mrs. M. were charming people, and they felt excessively obliged to them for making such a pleasant sensation in the town. But to the former classes, affairs appeared in a quite different light; yet, if possible, even more gratifying to them than to the others. Both beaux and belles soon had the intense satisfaction, the supreme delight, of discovering that what they had predicted, what they had hoped, if the truth must be told, had come to pass. Our poor friend Frank was the "immolated" on either side; since the belles felicitated themselves with the idea that he was punished, for his preference of Isadora; and the beaux, that they were revenged for the gay lady's preference of him. This grand discovery soon became the general theme of converse. Incalculable quantities of whisperings, *disettes*, and scandal, were floating about. The gentlemen shrugged their shoulders, with a knowing smile, at the singular change in the humour of their old friend, and feared as much. The ladies were not blind—not they—they saw plainly enough how matters stood, and had always predicted it. Indeed, to sing the song in short metre, the public settled quietly and confidently down in the faith, that Miss Isadora, the celestial Isadora Cruston, had turned out a veritable Xantippe; and that the gallant, the cynical, the matchless Frank Morton was, unequivocally and incorrigibly, a henpecked husband!

But the most singular phase in the phenomenon, was that Frank, the once high-souled and haughty Frank, did not in the least degree revolt against the domestic despotism under which he was crushed; but, on the contrary, seemed to take delight in

bending, with studied submission, to the iron rule. This humility, in a man of Mr. Frank Morton's former temper, was strange indeed; and to all, excepting to Mr. Sydney Brown, who claimed to know a thing or two, was most unaccountable. When bantered by his friends, Frank took all in good part, and listened incredulously to the propositions of resistance which were made to him, as though they were the mere dreamings of a disordered imagination. At such moments, however, his friends occasionally detected a lurking smile in his eye, which but quadrupled their perplexity. Isadora had also noted, with anxious curiosity, Frank's strange obedience to her slightest will, both in public and private; and the mysterious smile which his friends had observed, created double alarm in her mind. The deference which he carefully paid to her—his naïve appeals to her superior judgment, which he invariably made, in all topics of conversation, in public or private, whether the theme was a lady's toilet or the policy of States, the confection of a cake or the solution of a geometric problem, the government of a nursery or the discipline of an army—both annoyed and terrified her. The position conceded to her became embarrassing; her crown weighed upon her brow; her sceptre wearied her hand, and she felt that she had assumed a power which she was incompetent to wield. Neither was it from her husband alone, that she received these exaggerated tokens of respect and devotion. All his especial friends, those who had once been ever ready to fling back her sarcasm and her sneer, now aided in canonizing her. Even the incorrigible Sydney Brown was submissive with the rest. Had she detected but the slightest symptom of irony in the exalted respect of her friends, all would have been well; but it was offered with such an immaculate air of sincerity and truth, that she was compelled to receive it, with the best grace she could assume. Day after day, she felt more keenly the painfulness of her position; to which was added, the perception she at length

had, of the ridiculous place her husband held in the household. She was a proud woman, and a slave to conventional law. She had only desired to govern through him, and not in her own name. The usages of society demanded this nominal authority, but Frank had rejected it, and publicly assumed the rank he really held. Nay, he studied to make his debasement even lower than it really was. He directed his correspondents to address him to the care of Mrs. Morton, and the lady had received several letters addressed to herself which were evidently written to him; while he occasionally sent her a sheet which had been directed to Mr. Morton, but very clearly, was addressed to her. Frank could not, or would not, explain to her the meaning of all this. When bills were sent to his house, he referred them to Mrs. Morton. He had even run up an account at her jeweller's, which was presented to her for payment; nay, more, he affected the character and airs of a *lady*; carried a parasol in the streets, and an embroidered cambric in his hand; rode horseback sideways, and flirted desperately with his admirer, Sydney Brown!

These little vagaries became so frequent, and were often-times so extravagant, that the dear public began to think our hero's afflictions had turned his brain; that he had been actually henpecked into madness. Isadora, when she recollect ed his natural humour, and the melancholy change her tyranny had really made in it, at times, fearfully admitted the same terrible thought. Then again, when she recalled the message which Mr. Sydney Brown had sent to her, from her husband, on the day of her return to her native land, and the intimacy which had since been renewed between Frank and that gentleman, her fears gave place to rage, in the reflection that there might be "method in his madness!" This last idea was not sustained by the fact that Mr. Brown humoured all his eccentricities; since that amiable gentleman had, as a friend, hinted

to her his belief, that her husband's imagination had, from some unaccountable cause, become deranged, and had begged her permission to lend that seeming assent to his fancies, which the case imperatively required.

As time passed on, her husband's singular affliction appearing to have somewhat abated, Isadora determined to resume the place in the gay world which she had partially abandoned. She was the more ready to do this, as Frank himself had suggested it; and at his desire she had resolved to give a dinner party, to which she conceded to him the sole privilege of inviting the guests. This concession was made, not merely to humour him, which she would have gladly done though, to any extent, in the hope of making him again what he once was—but she was tired of her usurped power, and sighed only to resign it, and reinstate her husband in all his rights.

In preparing the cards for the coming fête, Frank proved himself very reasonably sane, carefully selecting only the tried friends of his family; those in whom he could, in all things, place the utmost confidence. Inasmuch as the affair had been left wholly to his direction, Isadora was, nevertheless, not a little mortified and surprised, to learn, on the very day of the dinner, that the invitations had been sent to every one in her name, instead of her husband's. From this incident she augured a recurrence of his idiosyncrasy; which fear, as the dinner hour approached, was greatly increased, and, finally, fully confirmed. As the guests began to assemble, the fair lady was horrified by a characteristic query from Frank, which proved that he again looked upon himself as the mistress, instead of the master, of the house.

"Frank, my love," said he, "since I left the whole of this affair to your pleasure, I hope that you have invited all your friends, not even excepting Sydney Brown. I certainly do not like Mr. Brown very much myself, but since he is the

cherished friend of my husband, I shall be always happy to receive him as such. It is no less my pleasure than my duty, dear Frank, to study your happiness before my own, in all things. I have sacredly pledged you my love and obedience, and I will never belie my promise."

"Frank!" exclaimed the bewildered and angry Isadora, "what does this nonsense mean? Are you really a fool, or do you wish to insult me?"

"My dear husband," returned Frank with a kind and gentle smile, "since it is your pleasure to call me by your own dear name, I cannot object to it; nor will I complain of any other strange cognomens you may give me. I can bear any thing from or for you, patiently and cheerfully."

"Frank!" interrupted the bewildered wife, "do, for heaven's sake—for my sake, cease this foolery, and go down to receive the guests. They are all arriving, and no one in the drawing-room!"

"*My* guests, my dear! I'm sure I did not invite them, and besides, you know that I have to dress for dinner—would you not like me to wear my new silk, with the beautiful point lace—"

Here our hero was interrupted in his toilet-speculations, by the abrupt and maddened departure of Isadora, who seeing no hope of making her husband conscious of his duties, hastened down stairs to welcome her friends, and to make an apology of sudden indisposition for Frank.

The excuse was of course sufficient, and every thing went on in all apparent harmony, until dinner was announced, and the guests were preparing to move to the *salon-a-manger*. At this instant, to the utter astonishment of the party, and to the entire petrifaction of Isadora, the invalid host entered the hall, in a complete suit of lady's apparel! He (or she) greeted the assembly with infinite grace, and hoped that Mr. Morton had given them all a cordial welcome, and made her excuse for her own tardy appearance. He then took the proffered arm of his cavalier, Mr. Sydney Brown, and

leading the way, was, as by a spell, followed by all to the table, where he seated himself on Isadora's chair and pointed her to the one he himself usually occupied!

She mechanically obeyed the gesture, but when Frank called upon her to pronounce the blessing, she could bear it no longer—and recalling her scattered senses, and a share of her accustomed self-possession, she made a motion for the banquet to proceed, and addressing the party, hoped that the absurd scene they were witnessing would be forgiven, since her poor husband had long been somewhat out of his mind, and was now evidently insane.

Mr. Sydney Brown, in pursuance of the permission which he held from Isadora, lent himself fully to the wild humour of his host; gallantly paying him all sorts of compliments, and carrying it so far as directly to address Isadora, now and then, as Mr. Morton.

"Shall I," said he at one moment, gaily bowing to Frank, "have the honour of taking wine with my fair hostess?" and then turning to Isadora, he added, "my friend Frank, you are backward to-day in good example; faith, your glass has not yet been touched!"

At another instant, he commenced a sentence to Frank touching a lady's opera costume, and finished it to Isadora, with a remark upon the probable results of the next Presidential election. Then again, he accused Frank of stealing away the hearts of all the beaux; but told Isadora she well repayed the theft, by *his* own notorious flirtations.

How long this odd scene might have continued we know not, had not a light suddenly burst upon Isadora's mind, as glancing at her husband, she detected the often observed, equivocal smile upon his lip; and at the same moment, upon that also of Mr. Sydney Brown.

The scenes of the past few weeks, and the sequel of to-day,

was, as by magic, explained to her. A deep blush of shame covered her face, and she burst into an uncontrollable fit of tears.

"Frank!" she exclaimed, amidst her sobs of mingled shame and rage, "why am I subjected to this outrage? What means this cruel farce?"

"It means, madam," said Frank, now gravely rising and speaking in his wonted tone of pride and command, "that you have so long abused my love, in usurping my authority, that I have resolved to gratify you to the top of your bent, and resign the shadow with the substance; to abandon to you the outward form of rule, since you have taken the spirit of it. I, therefore, formally make over to you, before these witnesses, every portion of my wardrobe, while I, in return, shall beg the use of yours! In short, madam you will now make choice of one or the other; either to take upon yourself my entire duties in the household, or totally resign your usurped and ill-placed authority, and become as a wife should be—modest, gentle and obedient!"

"Spare me! oh! forgive me!" cried the conquered Isadora, falling at his feet. "The punishment you have inflicted upon me is only just—and yet it is cruel—oh! too cruel! I have long, dearest Frank, felt my error and sighed to retrieve it. The lesson you have taught me, is bitterly completed to-day. It is so stricken in my heart, that it can never be forgotten. Forgive me! and I promise you by the solemn vow I once pledged you, to become, henceforth, all your brightest dreams could ever have shown you in a wife!"

"Ah, my Isadora! once again my own loved Isadora!" cried the now really crazy Frank, as he raised his repentant wife and clasped her to his breast, "Oh! bitterly now, should I regret the severe measures I have used, but for the wonderful and happy results! Oh! Isadora, you are well for-

given—but can you ever pardon *me*, and our good friend too?" he added, placing her hand in that of Sydney Brown, who stood, for once in his life, embarrassed by the strangeness of his position.

This *mauvaise honte* vanished, as Isadora kindly pressed his hand, and in a sweet voice, pronounced his pardon and her thanks. Sydney, sinking upon his knee, pressed the fair fingers to his lips, and sacredly promised never again to flirt with Frank, if the sacrifice should even break his heart!

When all explanations had been duly made, mutual pardons granted, and the felicitations of friends offered, Frank addressing the assembly, said—

"The *role*, which you now know me to have been long playing, has, thank God, been eminently happy in its *denouement*. I have taken care that none should witness this painful scene, but well tried friends, in whose honour I have perfect reliance, and I must now exact a solemn promise from all, to keep the incidents of to-day forever sacred as the grave."

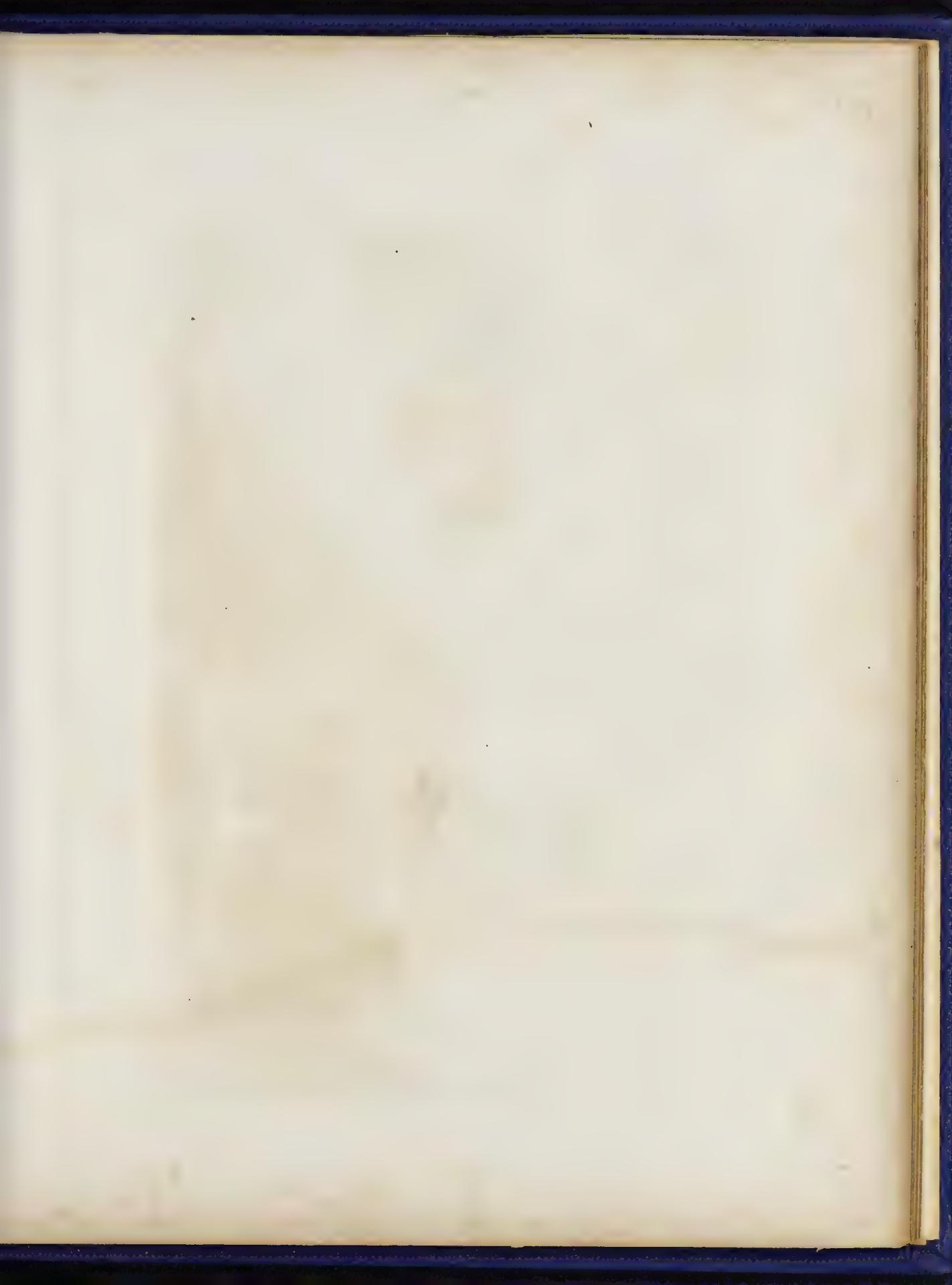
"No, no!" interposed Isadora, "the world knows my fault, and it is but just that they should witness its punishment."

"I will not accept so hard a penance," returned Frank. "Let them know only the results. My good friend Sydney, whose genius alone has accomplished these glorious effects, will know best how to complete his work."

* * * * *

Once again the good good people of —— were taken by surprise. Mr. and Mrs. Morton were never to be seen but together, each as gay and joyous as in the merry days of their courtship. Whenever allusion happened to be made to the metamorphosis, Frank looked with a smile of pity and triumph upon the querist, which seemed to establish the very common report, that the scandal-loving public had been the egregious dupes of the inveterate wag and bitter satirist, Frank

Morton, who, with the assistance of his equally satirical Isadora, had so long successfully *played* the part of the Hen-pecked Husband! Their envious friends were compelled to swallow this bitter pill of chagrin, when even the hitherto invincible Sydney confessed that his friend Frank had at last *done him Brown!*





CHAPTER XIV.

"GENTLEMEN," said the chairman, "as we gathered for the last time around our social board, we are happily completing our pleasant labours, just as the returning summer is calling us forth again to the actual enjoyment of those out-of-door beauties, with which we have so long been delighting ourselves in memory and in fancy.

"With a hasty visit, to-night, to the charming landscape of the Eastern States, we must close our discursive pilgrimage, and shake hands, with the hope that our recollections may give as much pleasure to our readers, as they have afforded to ourselves.

"We have lingered amidst many lovely scenes in our grand tour of the Union, but none more beautiful than those we have yet to look upon, among the noble hills, and valleys, and lakes of brave and gallant New England. It is a very easy and very remunerative labour to travel here, where the facilities of locomotion are so great, and where every step offers some object of interest and beauty in physical nature or in social life. Throughout the length and breadth of this region we shall everywhere meet pleasant scenes and pleasant people. The only

difficulty is to determine where to begin our rambles, where so many things divide our love. Perhaps we had better each discourse of his favourite haunts, while we all remember that our especial theme is the natural beauty, and not the social or industrial characteristics of this country. I esteem this caution necessary here, where we may be so much tempted to linger in the thousand charming homes and villages, or among the innumerable temples of ingenious toil."

"Suppose then," said Mr. Megilp, "we commence with Maine as the largest, if not the most attractive, link in Yankeedom. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will take the rugged old Lumber State for my share in your proposed 'partition.' I have a fancy for the wild solitudes, yet left to us, in her primitive forests, and along her rocky and islanded coasts. I love to linger amidst the thickly-wooded passages of her mountain brooks, and to meditate upon the lonely summits of her great hills—great even in their proximity to the more famous heights of New Hampshire. You should stand, as I have often done, upon the stern crown of old Katahdin, or upon the crest of Sugar-Loaf, and look out over the unrivalled panorama of hills, and valleys, and lakes innumerable; or you should explore the yet untrodden recesses of these valleys and waters, where you may alike abundantly gratify both your passion of artist and hunter. And then, too, there is still a world of beauty in reserve, along the wild courses of her noble rivers, the Kennebec and the Penobscot. I advise some of you to pitch your tents next summer among the beauties of this too-much neglected region."

"It is of but little use," said Mr. Vermeille, "to direct the tourist thither, however well his journeyings may repay him, while he can revel, so much more at his ease, among the still greater charms to be seen in the famous hill and lake districts of the Granite State. Who wants to toil up the

wearisome ascent of Katahdin while he can ride comfortably to the nobler height of Mount Washington, and gaze upon a panorama of hill and vale reaching even to the far-off sea. Can Moosehead or Umbagog rival the mirroring beauties of Winnipissiogee and Squam; or does Maine offer a parallel to the stupendous pass of the Notch in our White Hills; or has she sweeter brooklets than the white-crested Ammonoosuck and Pemigewasset? The stone-face of the venerable Old Man of the Mountain, gazing, from his rocky heights, over his enchanted domain, would take a yet more flinty aspect, were we to question the supremacy of his claims to the first rank in the noble landscape of New England."

"It were vain," said Mr. Flakewhite, "to deny that New Hampshire is unsurpassed in the magnificence of her mountain scenery: and yet there are aspects of Nature here, which delight me more. Such are the gentler scenes which we find everywhere along the valleys of those beautiful rivers, the Housatonic and the Connecticut. This softer landscape, while it does not strike the eye so vividly, yet fills the heart more surely and more enduringly. It is a region in which you may contentedly dwell, not for a day, but for ever: since it commands the beautiful in Nature, with all the supplies and comforts of life. Here, while pursuing your daily toils, you may drink in the delights of inspiriting scenery, and always and insensibly

"See and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language which thy God
Utters; who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all things, and all things in Himself;
Great Universal Teacher! He shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it well.'

I once, with some pleasant companions, made a pedestrian

tour through the valley of the Housatonic, entering it at the cozy village of Old Stockbridge, and lingering among its chiefest beauties in Berkshire. On the way, we made a slight detour to that happy cluster of lakes, in western Connecticut, of which the Washinee and the Washining, or the Twin-Lakes, are the centre.

"But the nobler Connecticut opens to us a yet richer landscape of the same class: a landscape so admirable, indeed, that it has no peer in all the land. The finest and most characteristic part of the Connecticut, lies about midway from its source among the hills, on the Canadian borders, to its entrance into Long Island Sound—stretching above, from Northampton to Brattleboro', and below, to Springfield. South of Springfield the waters flow through a pleasant and densely settled, yet comparatively low and unattractive country; while north of Brattleboro' both the river and the valley grow narrow and rugged, presenting, more and more, the usual aspect of mountain streams. Northampton, and its neighbourhood, presents a most charming picture of plenty and comfort in its luxuriant meadows, and cozy homesteads, and is at the same time surrounded by the boldest hill-features of the Connecticut. Here we may look, from a hundred varying points, upon the rocky face of Mount Tom, or upon the acclivities of his confrere, bold Holyoke. Both these fine elevations come admirably and effectively into all the views from the valley levels; but they owe their wide fame to the surprising panorama seen from their summits. Turn our gaze as we will, from the top of Mount Holyoke, and we everywhere see vast sweeps of cultivated meadow, and interminable chains of distant hills. Beautiful villages, with their soaring church spires, rise thickly around us, and the gleaming river, in its winding flight, leads our delighted eye far away to the peaks of the Green and the White Mountains."

"How gay," said Professor Scumble,

"How gay the habitations that bedeck
This fertile valley! Not a house but seems
To give assurance of content within,
Embosom'd happiness, and placid love;
As if the sunshine of the day were met
By answering brightness in the hearts of all
Who walk this favour'd ground!"

"Beautiful as is the country around Mount Holyoke," continued Mr. Flakewhite, "I will not say there are not more charming scenes still beyond: indeed my memory recalls, at this moment, no glimpses of the Connecticut valley more pleasing than sundry views commanded by the Poet's Seat, a bold precipice near Greenfield; at Vernon also, and at Deerfield, Brattleboro', and Bellows Falls, there is a world of interest in the ever-varying panorama."

"This is a venerable region," said the chairman; "some of the towns of this valley are as old as the first settlements of New England. Northampton, for instance, young and rosy as it looks to-day, was born full two hundred years ago. No wonder then, that, like many other portions of the Eastern States, it contrasts so vividly with newer and rougher parts of the Union."

"It abounds, also," said Mr. Asphaltum, "with bloody traditions of Indian warfare. Everywhere the traveller is reminded, by tale or tablet, of some trying adventure in the history of our sturdy ancestors. At Deerfield, there is a marble monument, commemorative of the fatal ambuscade in 1675, when the savages waylaid and murdered a company of eighty-four gallant youths, the flower of the settlement."

"There is one important division of our subject which we have not yet touched," said Mr. Blueblack, "and it claims very respectful consideration, I assure you, even after the visit to

New Hampshire and the Connecticut. I speak, of course, of the hills and valleys of Vermont—of the meadows which lie along the shores of Lake Champlain, overlooking those great waters, and the greater chains of the Adirondack's spurs beyond —of the fair vale and stream of Winooske, and the proud crests of Mansfield and the Camel's Hump. The views from the tops of these great mountains will well repay the toil of ascent; and the waters of the Winooske, pleasing in their whole flow of forty miles, from the capital to the lake, are, in many places, of exceeding interest: there is much of beauty, too, found in the tributary brooks. The Huntington river contains some fine ravine passages near its entrance into the Winooske, at Jonesville. In addition to the pleasures of a charming landscape, Vermont will introduce you to one of the most agreeable and hospitable of the Yankee populations. In their sturdy independence and general intelligence, you will find strong traces of the honest, manly spirit of their Allens and Starks, of times, happily, gone by."

"You will scarcely believe it," said Mr. Brownoker, "but I made my first excursion down East, only last summer. In view of all I have heard of 'steady habits,' blue-laws, liquor-laws, and the gravity of Plymouth Rock, I set forth with much fear and trembling, afraid that I should find myself a very black sheep in the flock: but I soon breathed more freely, when I discovered that I had not got into such an extremely 'serious family' after all. To be sure, on my first 'Sabbath,' —there is no Sunday in New England—my landlord solemnly proffered me 'a pew in meeting'; but, then, to make amends, in the afternoon, his daughters—merry lasses, and mischievous as Satan—invited me, on the sly, to accompany them in an 'huckleberry' excursion 'over the hills and far away.' My host himself, I afterwards found out, notwithstanding that he shaved very clean and had a 'family bible that lay on the stand,'

could swear like our army in Flanders; but he always piously qualified his oaths by saying (in parenthesis, and with virtuous suavity), 'to speak after the manner of men.' Thus—'I was so darned riled, Mr. Brownoker, that I told the infernal scoundrel to go to h— heaven! speaking, you know, after the manner of men.'

"Though the immortal Maine Law had just gone into operation, and, like a new broom, might be expected then, if ever, to work thoroughly, nowhere could I innocently, and in good faith, demand a glass of innocuous 'soda,' without being mysteriously conducted into a retired apartment, and having an obnoxious decanter thrust under my afflicted nose.

"Altogether, I soon learned that, despite the decorous exterior which the good folks wore, through long and general habit, not hypocrisy, they were, no more than others, in any way 'too virtuous for cakes and ale:' that they were still sufficiently 'of the earth, earthy,' and possessed of a goodly modicum of the leaven of evil—a very essential alloy to the 'cardinals' in the production of the pure coinage of human sympathy and love."

"Creatures not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food,"

said Scumble, approvingly.

"Yes, men and women, the world over, are, *au fond*, pretty much the same," continued Mr. Brownoker, with a gravity of manner worthy of the chair, "despite the disguising incrustations with which education and circumstances may enwrap them. 'From Greenland's icy mountains to Afric's burning strand,' and 'all intermediate landings,' the geology of the human heart is the same. Everywhere we detect the same identical strata, though the surface may vary much. Strong passions, both good and evil, slumber under the cold phlegmatic exterior of New England, no less than beneath the lighter

upper soil of the tropics. Now and then these latent fires flame up through the heaviest superincumbent mass, as they did once upon a time gloriously at Bunker Hill, and Lexington, and Concord, and Bennington, as they still occasionally do, most ingloriously, in the fanaticism of an abolition riot. I once 'assisted' in a playful ebullition of the hidden 'Satan,' on the part of a merry group of Yankee matrons—most grave and reverend matrons—the light and delight of the staid community in which they dwelt. The occasion was the anniversary festival of a mock society of

Woman's Rights.

"I was a guest in a spacious New England hotel, which, with its outbuildings, was the Alpha and Omega of a great town that was to have been, but had not as yet found leisure to be. It was a wayside house, famous for its attractions, especially to brief excursion parties, in all the country round; and being a railroad station, conveniently equidistant from two considerable cities, it was, of course, much frequented.

"Every pleasant summer-day brought to its liberal table, its cordial hospitality, and its surrounding natural beauties, smaller or larger parties of gay visitants: now, a graceless squad of lawless collegians, and, again, tender pairs of cooing doves, who set but little store by the groaning boards, but very properly appreciated the moonlight in the groves and glens, and on the silvered waters of the neighbouring lake.

"We had our own quiet fun out of all these pleasant occasions, but they seemed scarce worthy of our enjoyment; when our landlord announced to us the approaching visit of a large party, formed of the ladies, the married ladies alone, of the vicinage.

"It was a droll association, as we learned from our host, formed of the first matrons of the region, who once a year threw aside the conventional shackles which chain them to their parlour walls, and, asserting their independence, go off on a 'bust,' 'after the manner of men.'

"The spiteful rain—as though the elements, too, maliciously joined in the oppression of the injured sex—poured down in such unmitigated torrents, on the day appointed for the novel visit, that we had but little hope of the affair coming off at all. But we did injustice to the metal of the fair amazons. When the expected hour came, there came the headlong locomotive with an extra shriek, and there, too, came the promised guests, pouring gaily out of the cars by dozens—as bewitching a fairy-guard as your fancy could fashion.

"As they debarked in their neat travelling dresses, made without any reference to uniformity of cut or colour, the only thing remarkable about them at the moment, beyond their gay flow of animal spirits, was their number, unsprinkled with pantaloons; though I learned afterwards that they had well sustained their assumed freedom on their journey down: two of the youngest and prettiest having entirely discomboberated a couple of meek young gentlemen by gallantly offering the new and unprovided comers their own comfortable seats; and others having taken up quarters in the baggage-cars, that they might indulge in their favourite luxury of a cigar.

"The ladies bestowed a cordial greeting, as they landed, upon 'the Judge,' our host, and were so gracious to the Judge's son, a budding youth, who piqued himself upon his manliness and his moustache, that starch could not save him for an instant. One fair belle was ahead of me in picking up a handkerchief which I happened to let fall, and which she politely presented to me with a patronizing smile, and—'You've dropped your cambric, my dear!' I simpered and blushed properly, and

the lady laughed gaily as I answered, with a bashful curtsey, ‘Thank you, sir, you are very kind!’ Then the free and easy air with which they roamed over all parts of the establishment, from the bar-room to the stables, and made love to the sterner sex, was edifying enough to gentlemen possessed of very high teeth, but deplorably annoying to would-be bucks, who still needed the watchful eye of mamma. It was, however, not until the late supper-hour, that the spirit of the occasion was thoroughly developed.

“A bountiful table—one of the Judge’s own famous boards—had been provided, and the ladies having fasted long beyond their accustomed quiet tea-time, sat down with a gusto which they usually display only in the pantry or at ‘lunch,’ when the gentlemen are all ‘down town.’

“Starting with the soup, in a sprightly genial humour, the convivés grew more and more *enthused* at each succeeding course, when, if the last piece of pudding did not do the business for them, as it did for gentle ‘Charles,’ the wines and cigars—very mild brands, both—which soon followed, certainly did. Each passing toast was rapturously greeted and eloquently answered, amidst a hurricane of ‘hear, hears!’ and the clapping of pretty hands and stamping of little feet; but it was the final sentiment which brought out the soul of the table, the ‘nine *groans* and a tiger,’ and the master-speech of the night.

“When this last supreme aspiration, ‘The Gentlemen—the d—l take them!’ was uttered from the Chair, the uproar grew inconceivable, and it was a long while before the voluble tongue of Mrs. O. K. could be distinguished amidst the marvellous din of voices.

“‘Ladies!’ cried that fervid apostle of progress, when chaos was at length caged, ‘as I listen to the noble sentiment which has just been announced, and turn my swollen eyes, red with sorrow, over the wrongs of our sex, upon the soaring crest,

yonder, of Camel's Hump—(hear, hear!)—yes, ladies, I say Camel's Hump!—(renewed cheering)—Camel's Hump, ladies!—I wonder that the indignant mountain does not fall upon and crush our oppressors!—(immense applause, and cries of 'Scratch their eyes out!')—We have borne it, ladies, long enough—too long. In the unanswerable language of that noble instrument, the great charter of our holy national liberties, we have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have done all that women can do—who dares do more is none! There is no longer time to talk—the crisis has come, and we must act—"act in the living present, heart within, and God o'erhead!"—(deafening cheers).—Flesh and blood can bear no more! Why, my beloved sisters—why, I ask you, and I pause for a reply—why should not we, like our arrogantly self-styled lords and masters—(deep groans and bitter sneers)—get our crowns smashed at the ballot-box, that bulwark of freedom!—(cries of 'Why, why!')—Why should we not, like them, fight for our country's rights on one leg and with one arm, when the others are gloriously gone!—('Why not!' from all parts of the house.)—Why should we, too, not be rocked, through sleepless nights, on the quivering spar washed by the waves of the ocean!—(increasing applause).—Why should we not grow strong in the fresh air, following the plough! Why must we be for ever and ignominiously set up as shrines of worship, sheltered from all the cares and dangers and toils of life, doomed inexorably to no higher fate than thoughtlessly and lavishly to spend our husbands' money, while they alone enjoy all the delights and excitement of making it! Why should we, too, not go on benders, and be jolly, as at this moment, and get home in the morning, with rosy noses and aching heads! But I weary you, ladies!—(terrible applause, and loud cries of 'Go on!')—I might, indeed, go on for ever, and then begin again, so appalling is the fearful picture which shocks my terror-stricken sight! But I need not

say more—my feeble tongue is not required! The fearful subject will speak for itself, in its still, small, but omnipotent voice, until the hills shall echo with its mighty story, and the floods of the great deep take up the resounding tale!—(indescribable excitement).—It shocks me—in the language of the poet—

“To think that earth should be so fair,
So beautiful and bright a thing;
That nature should come forth and wear
Such glorious apparelling;
That sea, earth, sky, should live, and glow
With light, and love, and holiness,
And yet man never feel or know
How much a God of Love can bless—
How deep his debt of thankfulness”

to woman, the patient, living author of his very life, the radiant jewel without which that life would be but a worthless casket—woman, the last, and most perfect work of heaven—woman, the angel of light, bringing—’

“Here the speaker's voice was irremediably drowned in a continuous and indescribable shriek of applause, and she sunk, like the maestro Jullien, exhausted to her seat.

“The party was to return by the night-train, which passed late in the small hours. Before their departure, they sent for the Judge, to be kissed, in behalf of his sex, as Louis Napoleon embraced the prettiest of an immense deputation of washer-women, in the name of the whole. I proposed to be the modest Judge's substitute, but, after a hot debate, was thrown out, on the score of my not being a married man! However, as a consolation and a mark of their esteem, they elected me, by acclamation, an honorary member of their charming society.

"The cars came at last, and the ladies ended their frolic, and went back to their pleasant homes once again—"

"To suckle fools and chronicle small beer,"

said Scumble, finishing the sentence.

"Gentlemen," said the chairman at this point, and in the midst of the merry comments upon the graphic "report" of Mrs. O. K.'s famous speech, "though this is our very last meeting, and we ought of right to linger, like Mr. Brownoker's notable ladies, until 'daylight doth appear,' yet you must remember our engagement at the 'Century,' and time waits. Besides, we have already given our host more rigmarole than his book will hold; if we feed him any longer with such succulent 'copy' he will grow entirely too plethoric for the paper-makers."

"Don't be in a hurry," said Mr. Megilp; "it's only ten o'clock, and when shall we all meet again? Stay a few minutes more to hear a brief stage-coach adventure of mine in the land of notions. It's the history of a slight mistake, which may serve you both as a warning and as a valediction."

"Well," said the chairman, "I 'capitulate' to the few minutes you require, but be sure that you rein up when they are expired."

"O, certainly," cried everybody; "plenty of time! of course we can't avoid

Megilp's Slight Mistake.

"The coach," said Mr. Megilp, "drove up to the piazza, where I was awaiting its arrival, as the darkness of a mild August night was growing too dense to be visible.

"My cigar being unfinished, I jumped upon the box with the driver, whom I found to be so agreeable an old fellow that I lighted and puffed pipe after pipe, in merry chat, until, the air growing a little chilly, I bethought me to get inside.

"'Not a bad idea,' said Jehu; 'there's an all-fired nice girl in there!'

"'The deuce there is!' said I; 'why did you not tell me before, you old ass?'

"'Because,' said Jehu, with a provoking grin, 'I supposed you would prefer my beautiful society!'

"'Pshaw!' said I, as the machine held up, and I leaped to the ground.

"Sure enough, just as the driver had said, there was a bundle of neglected beauty nodding on the back seat, but of what style, whether blonde, brown, or brunette, it was quite too dark to tell.

"I established myself alongside, but, after various futile attempts at talking, found the lady too sleepy therefor. I nodded too, until a jolt aroused me from love's young dream, but only to make me nod again, when I found the innocent head of my companion gracefully pillow'd upon my shoulder. Bless her dear little heart! I thought, travelling all alone by herself; and, the better to protect her gentle slumbers, I kindly wound my arm about her pliant waist. Then I dreamed again, and again awoke, and afraid that the fair one might not yet be sufficiently comfortable, I drew her still nearer to me—and I am not so certain that, in some of the many jolts, our lips did not occasionally meet!

"Thus it went on until something frightened the horses into a run, which upset the entire concern, at the sharp corner of a small house, much nearer than it ought to have been to the roadside. The impersonation of Cupid and Psyche was abruptly ended by this untoward accident. In the confusion

of the moment, I had jumped unconsciously out of the coach, and as soon as my scattered senses came home, I snatched a light from the hands of one of the people of the house, and began to look about for the lady, quite unheedful of the dolorous cries of an old coloured woman, who was screaming that her 'neck was clear broke!'

"'Blast your neck!' I cried, pushing her aside, as I rushed to the coach. 'Good heavens, she's not here, she's nowhere! We must have spilt her out on the road!'

"'She's all right!' said the driver, with a sardonic laugh.

"'All right! how?'

"'O yes, sir; thank you, sir; don't be frightened! It's only my poor neck that's broke!' said the squalling black Phillis aforesaid.

"'O,' said I, as the terrible truth dawned upon my benighted mind, 'O, you are the lady, are you? he, he; yes, yes; ah yes; it's all right.'

"'All right!' echoed Jehu, when, having put the establishment on its pins again, and the lady in her seat, he prepared to resume his journey. 'Will you risk the chances again, inside, sir, or will you try another cigar on the box?'

"Gentlemen, I took the cigar and the driver, instead of the senorita, though I assure you it was but Hobson's choice between them. That's all. You may scatter now as fast as you please."

"'Last scene of all this strange eventful history,'"

sighed Professor Scumble.

Hereupon, dear readers, our guests shook hands with us and with each other, and with many kind words to you all, and many hopes that their gossip may find favour in your sight, they vanished from our own.

And now, "finally, and to conclude," as the worthy chairman, kind reader, would say to you, were he still here, "God bless you, friends."

As our dear magniloquent Megilp would express it: "May you live a thousand years!"

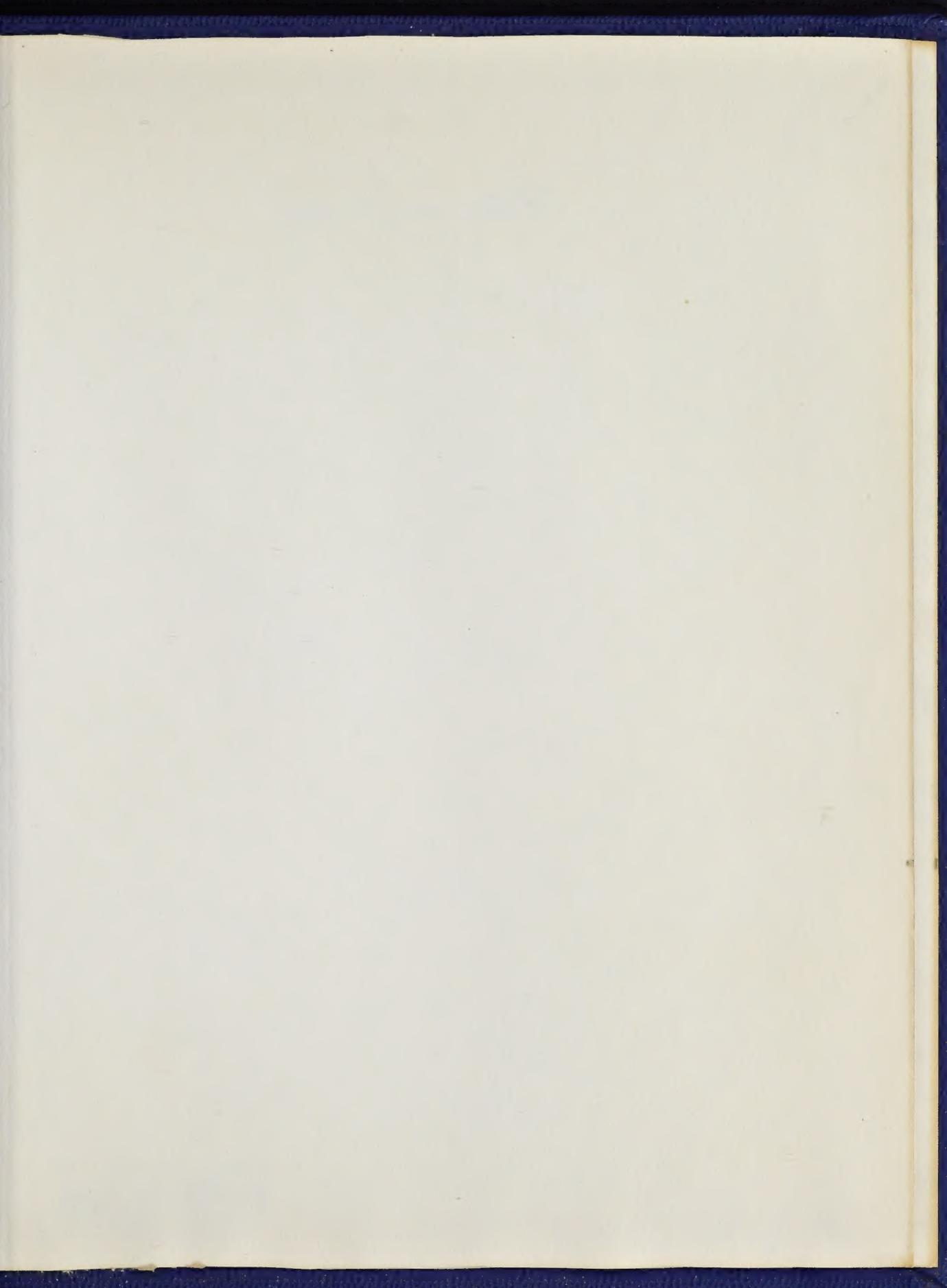
As the dainty Flakewhite's aromatic words would flow: "May all good angels guard you!"

As the downright hearty Brownoker would blurt: "Good luck to you, boys!"

Or, as our ancient parchment, Professor Scumble would add:—

"And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part."

THE END.



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